

spare

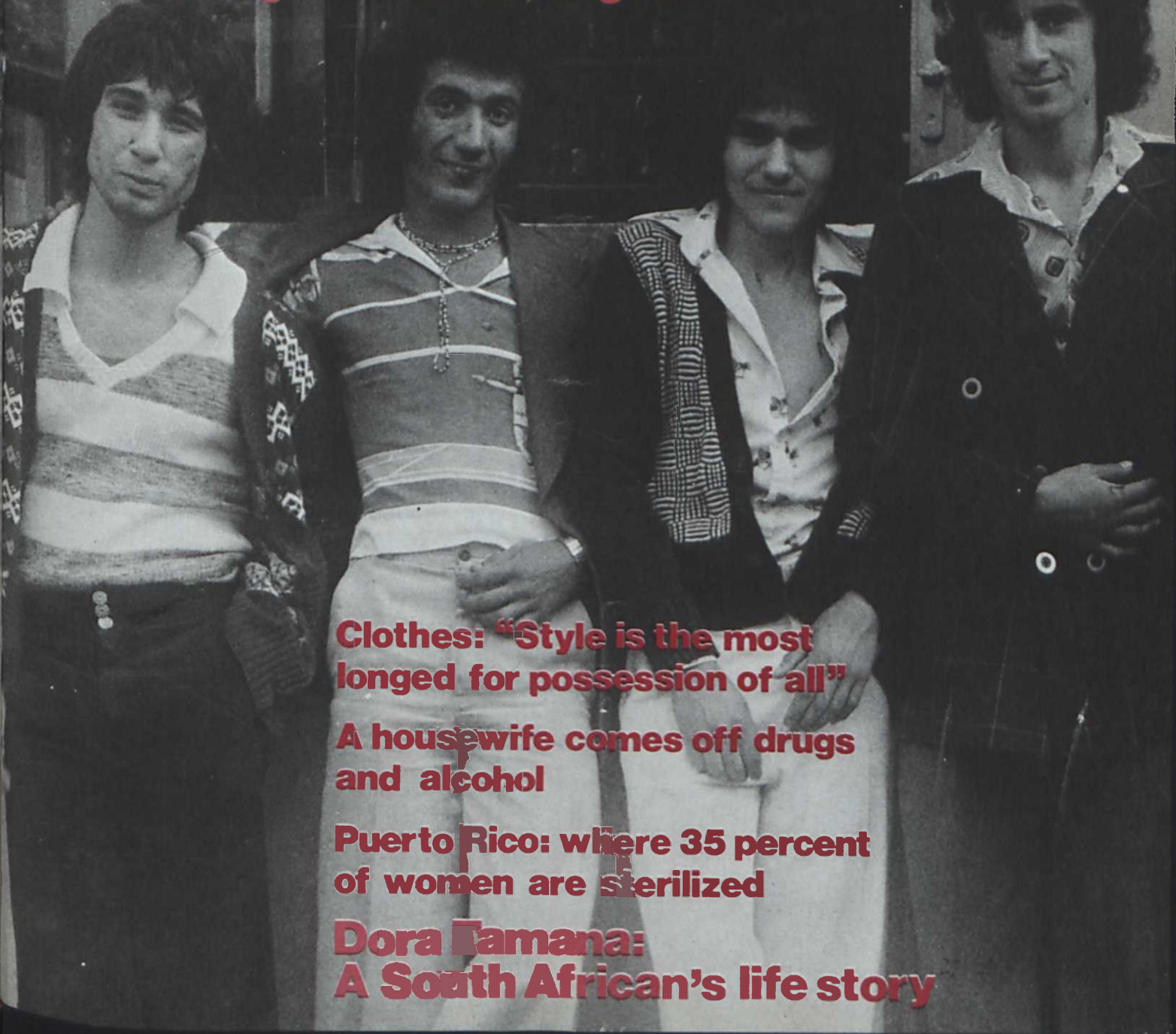
Rib

Sept 75
No 39/30p

P 523/344



**Cypriot girls in Britain:
"My marriage will be arranged"**



**Clothes: "Style is the most
longed for possession of all"**

**A housewife comes off drugs
and alcohol**

**Puerto Rico: where 35 percent
of women are sterilized**

**Dora Tamana:
A South African's life story**

Virago

is a feminist publishing imprint set up to produce books which express – over as wide an area as possible – the ideas of the women's movement in Britain.

VIRAGO is an editorial group of women, whose books are produced, distributed and financed by Quartet Books.

The VIRAGO books shown here are just a beginning . . . we hope to expand and make our facilities available to a larger number of women in the future. And we want to extend our publishing in the areas where new books are much needed . . . women's history, sexuality, education, non-sexist books for schools, etc . . .

Titles for 1975



Fenwomen

A Portrait of Women in an English Village
Mary Chamberlain

The women in an isolated rural community tell us in their own words of their experiences, feelings and memories.

Illustrated with old photos, and contemporary ones by *Angela Phillips*.

8 September: £3.95

Forgetting's No Excuse

Mary Stott

This edition of feminist and campaigner Mary Stott's autobiography is revised and updated to include her involvement in the Women's Movement.

30 October: large format paperback £1.75

My Secret Garden

Women's Sexual Fantasies
Compiled by Nancy Friday

Foreword by *Jill Tweedie*
Women are supposed not to have sexual fantasies. The women who talk here break the silence created by isolation and social convention in a book which is often astonishing and always illuminating.

16 October: £4.50

Titles for 1976

The Gender Trap

A Closer Look at Sex Roles
Carol Adams/Rae Laurikietis

Book 1: Education and Work
Book 2: Sex and Marriage
Book 3: Messages and Images
Rigorously feminist series about the sex roles imposed on girls and boys, for young people in schools, colleges, and at work, and for parents and teachers.

1: Jan. 2: March. 3: May.
Hardback £2.95 Paperback 90p.

Fathers and Daughters

Russian Women in Revolution
Cathy Porter

This absorbing account of 19th-century Russian revolutionary women, whose activities culminated in the assassination of the Tsar in 1881, redresses a view of history which has too often denied women's role in political events.

February: £3.95

The Paradise Papers

The Suppression of Women's Rites

Merlin Stone

The story of the ancient female religion, which flourished in a world where women developed to a degree unknown in our culture – and whose destruction by the Judaic/Christian religions has so damaged the status of women.

March: illustrated £3.95

Is This Your Life?

Images of Women in the Media
Edited by Josephine King

and *Mary Stott*
A group of women writers investigate the attitudes and images of the media and show how they affect us as women. Written by members of Women in Media and the Women's Music Collective.

May: illustrated: Hardback £3.50; Paperback £1.95

The Sadeian Woman

Angela Carter

A brilliant study taking as its starting point de Sade's extraordinary vision of a woman, who, sexually free, exists in perfect freedom; showing male and female to be not mutually exclusive categories but politically defined roles.

June: £3.95

An Older Love

Charlotte Wolff

The first novel by the author of *Love Between Women*: the story of Christabel, Caroline, Emma and others: women living within the social and religious conventions, locked in ignorance of their true sexuality.

September: £3.25

The British Women's Directory

Everything you've always wanted to know about the Women's Movement, but have previously found only on odd bits of paper.

November: £1.25



Virago titles should be available from your local bookseller or library: in case of difficulty, please write to us at 3 Cheyne Place, London SW3 4HH. We can also send you a full catalogue, which will tell you more about our books.

spare Rib

September 1975
ISBN 0306-7971

Front Cover: Young Cypriot men
Photo by Caroline Maidlow

Letters	4	
Shortlist	6	Projects, centres and pamphlets
Editorial	8	Abortion — why do we say “A Woman’s Right to Choose”?
Feature	9	Dora Tamana Dora Tamana, now 74, has lived in Cape Town for 45 years. Rosalynde Ainslie describes how she became drawn into the problems and struggles of the women around her by her experience of poverty and racialism
Science	14	Seeing through Science The Women and Science Collective look at the way it affects our lives and the dangers of either obediently accepting or hopelessly rejecting all things scientific
News	17	Forced Sterilisation in Puerto Rico Why have 35% of the women of childbearing age been sterilised? Lynn de Pietro investigates Abortion Act Threat Liz Warren concludes her seven-part series on James White’s Abortion (Amendment) Bill. <i>Plus</i> news of pickets, resolutions and church reports about the Bill. Reports Asian women strike at Heathrow Airport. National Labour History Museum opens in Limehouse. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital to stay open? International Women’s Year UN Conference in Mexico: “A predictable ten-year plan was ratified.” I.W.Y. — irrelevant to Indian women?
Odds and Sods	29	Inquiries for information and advice answered by Wisty Hoyland
Fashion	30	“Style is the most longed for possession of all” Elizabeth Wilson looks at how we relate to the clothes we wear today
Poetry	33	
Problems of Life	34	Cypriot Stories Three Cypriot schoolgirls find that their school life introduces new possibilities which bring them into conflict with Cypriot family tradition
Arts	37	Positive Discrimination Michelene Wandor confronts the problem of how we respond to and criticise each other’s work
Reviews	40	Books Nicci Crowther and Hilary Gannaway on readers for teenagers Film “One Two Three” A film about Dartmouth Park Hill child care centre Theatre Madeleine Simms on Bubble Theatre’s new “The Trial of Marie Stopes”
Medical	42	Coming Off Drugs and Alcohol A member of Essex Road Health Group describes her mother’s fight to break free of her addiction
Law	46	Hometruths Can a man evict the woman he’s living with if he’s paying the rent? Felicity Crowther answers questions on housing rights

Please send a stamped addressed envelope with all unsolicited manuscripts.
Spare Rib: Published monthly by Spare Ribs Ltd, 9 Newburgh Street, London W1A 4XS. Telephone 01-437 2070. Printed by Carlisle Web Offset Ltd, Newtown Trading Estate, Carlisle CA2 7NR. Type-setting by Caroline MacKechnie and Shirley Divers, 105 Golborne Road, W10. Telephone 01-969 5083. Distributed by Moore Harness Ltd, 31 Corsica Street, London N5. Copyright here and abroad in all news, feature articles and photographs is held by Spare Ribs Ltd. Reproduction in whole or in part of any article is forbidden save with the express permission of Spare Ribs Ltd.

Spare Rib is produced collectively by the following people, some part-time, some full-time: Rose Ades, Alison Fell, Kate Hepburn, Wisty Hoyland, Laura Margolis, Madeleine Neenan, Jill Nicholls, Rosie Parker, Marsha Rowe, Ann Scott.

*If you have
any difficulty
in finding*

spare Rib

Why not fill in the coupon and hand it to your local newsagent.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PLEASE RESERVE A COPY OF
SPARE RIB STARTING WITH
ISSUE NO. 39 PUBLICATION
DATE AUGUST 27th 1975

Distributors: MOORE HARNESS,
31 CORSICA STREET,
LONDON N5.



* indicates that the letter has been cut

LETTERS



Outside Society

Gerrie Moore wrote to Spare Rib (No. 37) describing the numerous ways society discriminates against prostitutes, ("I feel the lack of political status very strongly") and objecting to the image of the prostitute ("Let's get rid of the peroxide blonde, cabbages will do for brains image"). The Sunday Times read her letter, contacted her and made her into a good story.

Dear Spare Rib,
As the mysterious "Josephine", the liberated hooker interviewed by the Sunday Times' Sue Read, I would like to express my anger over inaccuracies in her article. Although, at the time of writing my letter to Spare Rib (No. 37) concerning the problems of prostitution I was on the game — I have since quit. My own choice. I made this quite clear when talking to Ms Read a few days before the article was published (July 20). The article misquoted me beyond the point of exploitation. None of the points I felt important were mentioned. Apart from sensationalising an important political issue, Ms Read has shamelessly prostituted her talents as a journalist and shamelessly exploited her own sex.

After abortion and rape, prostitution will be "the" women's issue.

Until journalism stops exploiting women economically, prostitutes will not stand up and be counted.

Why should they?
In anger,
G. Moore

Offensive

Dear Spare Rib,
This is the offensive and facetious reply I received to a

letter I wrote to the *Guardian*, asking why they had sent a male reporter to cover the International Women's Year Conference. 'Dear Ms Smithe Thank you for drawing my attention to our slip over the Mexico Conference. I have had the reporter concerned castrated. Yours sincerely, Harold Jackson Features Editor'.

I felt so angry that I've written to him again though I don't suppose it'll do much good. Love and sisterhood Paula Smithe Brighton

This is a letter from the CAB in response to a letter from Jane (Spare Rib 37).

Dear Jane,
I am very sorry that you received such an unfavourable impression of the Citizens Advice Bureau Service when you contacted the Oxford Bureau to enquire about the women's centre. I can assure you that a response from the Bureau such as you describe in your letter to Spare Rib (July issue) would not be a typical one. However, I would be most grateful if you would help us to clear up this matter by getting in touch with me. Yours sincerely, A J Leighton Chief Executive Citizen's Advice Bureaux 26 Bedford Square London WC1B 3HU

Wrong Address

Dear Spare Rib,
As one rather new adolescent, I think you should be told that children find it just as insulting to be called 'kids' as your readers would be at being called 'chicks' or 'birds'. Love, Virginia Fearon (aged 13) Manchester

Nursery Campaign

Dear Spare Rib,
Today Fred Mulley announces a planned cutback in the educa-

tion sector, with specific reference to nurseries and universities. As a student with two small kids I see this as a threat from two sides: Warwick university has already discontinued informing prospective students of the existence of a small but hard-won creche in an effort to ultimately declare it obsolete, and there are virtually no State-run nurseries locally with space for kids not listed as priority cases.

Whatever happened to the first Women's Liberation Conference resolution to campaign for 24-hour nurseries? Last autumn, the Nottingham women's group advertised the launching of a National Child Care Campaign at a conference attended by some 70 women representative of a wide cross-section of regions and occupations connected with pre-school children. In May a follow-up conference was held, with more publicity attracting some new women, but with a total attendance of only 30. Ten days ago, after circulating women's groups, Working Women's Charter groups etc as well as interested organisations such as Gingerbread and Nursery Nurses, only 15 women attended a London meeting intended to provide the launching of a national campaign for child-care facilities.

At a time of successive cutbacks, combined with the threat of a revived ideology that would justify throwing women first out of employment and back to the full-time 'vocation' of baby-minding, it is more important than ever that we organise to resist this form of coercion. It also makes it significantly easier to fight local closures if one is in touch with similar struggles elsewhere, and can learn from other women's experiences. For a starting-point, would it not be possible to take the proposed amalgamation of numerous primary schools, now that middle schools are being introduced to absorb the 8-12 year-olds that used to go there? If one could insist that no school should face being shut down because of reorganisation, it would then be

possible to demand that the extra classrooms be used as play-space for under-fives.

Are other readers also affected by the lack of child-care facilities, and do they have suggestions how a campaign for more adequate provision could be nationally co-ordinated? In sisterhood Amanda Binns Leamington Spa Warks

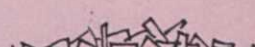
Pill without Periods

* Dear Spare Rib,
I thought I'd write to you about an aspect of the contraceptive pill which is never mentioned. I am referring to taking the pill continually and not stopping for the customary seven days each month to allow menstruation to occur. I have tried this (on the advice of the Princess Margaret Migraine Clinic and the FPA) as a remedy for migraines which generally occur during menstruation and also pre-menstrual tension. So far it seems to have worked but I feel that this process is invaluable to all women who dislike their periods for one reason or another.

The feeling of controlling one's own body is fantastic. If I wanted I could go back to having periods. When taking the pill without periods it is wise to take a low dosage pill, as the monthly intake of hormone is obviously greater when it is taken for 28 instead of 21 days in each month. I understand that no harmful side effects whatsoever have been discovered to be caused by preventing periods in this way.

Previously doctors advised women doing this to stop for a period every six months or so, mainly so that women could check that they were functioning correctly. Of course you cannot immediately tell if you are pregnant, but if you are taking the pill every day as directed you cannot become pregnant.

I think that this method of contraception and prevention of menstruation is very important to the liberation of women, after all, no employer can refuse a woman a job on account of her menstrual cycle, if she has none. I have never felt so liberated



CAZ

before! Although I believe that women should love their bodies, I see no reason why women should be made to suffer unnecessary inconvenience, discomfort and pain. You will notice that the realisation that periods can be abolished for women on the pill has been kept very quiet. This male-orientated society is afraid as ever, of women becoming free.

Yours
Josette Coburn-Morgan
Highgate
London N6

* Dear Spare Rib,
With reference to J. Jones' letter (Spare Rib 37), I disagree that freely available contraceptives are a reason to stop abortions.

According to a report commissioned by the Lane Committee, 75% of the women questioned were using some form of contraceptive when they became pregnant, of these a third were not using it properly and two thirds were using unreliable methods.

There is still no contraceptive that is 100% effective that all women can use. Surely J. Jones would agree that no woman should be forced to bear a child when she has been doing all that she can to avoid becoming pregnant. Women will never be able to plan their lives and careers if they cannot control their own bodies.

As to single girls being pressurised into abortions, I agree that in a Utopian society every child ever conceived would have loving parents, marvellous housing and beautiful surroundings and nobody would be under any pressure of any sort, but women must live now with parents/husbands who aren't understanding, with bad housing, poor pay and prejudice. Women have to decide what they want for themselves and their families and no one should limit these choices in any way. Has J. Jones the right to say it is easier for women to give up a baby than it is to decide to have an abortion? And would he/she dare to suggest to the 45,000 married women who had abortions last year that they should have gone through with

the pregnancy and then given the child away, I think not. It is always assumed by the anti-abortionists that a married woman would never do such a thing. No man made law will ever stop abortions, it will only stop safe, legal ones.

Maggie Moore
Member of the Havering Abortion Action Group
25 Cromer Rd
Romford
Essex

Depression

* Dear Spare Rib,
I wonder how many other people find themselves in the same situation as myself.

Nine months ago I finished a course of treatment consisting of consultations and drugs for depression. Having got over the initial shock of recognising the condition I was in, I was lucky enough to find a GP who referred me to a psychiatrist. What I wasn't prepared for was the complete refusal to recognise the condition from my husband. The answer I got from him was that there is no such condition as depression — everyone feels low at times and anyone who hasn't the willpower to snap out of it is simply spineless. After nearly a year of treatment I suddenly felt the clouds lifting.

Now, nine months later I am rapidly reaching a depressed state again. But I don't think I could face the humiliation of the psychiatrist's waiting room, the pill swallowing, and most of all the mocking, cruel reaction from my husband.

When will depression be widely recognised as an illness which cannot be cured without professional help, when will the stigma be removed?

Sincerely
Nina
Devon

* Dear Spare Rib,
Dr Widgery in his article on Valium (No.36) rightly implicates the stresses of society as producing the need for such a drug, and I would agree wholeheartedly with his call to 'abolish the system producing the need

rather than the drug'. It is however perhaps misleading that the only woman quoted has come to this realisation — unfortunately in my experience a large number who suffer the symptoms of stress are still caught in the belief that this is a manifestation of their personal inadequacy, reinforced by the media and by every other woman putting on her happy, coping 'public face'. Of course such women turn eagerly to the concept of these symptoms constituting an 'illness' i.e. something which has come over them like flu. The doctor in prescribing Valium tends to both confirm that there is an illness to be treated and absolves the patient of any need to look more closely for the cause of her symptoms, this being perhaps the most insidiously dangerous aspect of its use, and one which the doctor should be very aware of and active against, if the aim is for long term well-being rather than the suppression of symptoms. I believe that it is not the realisation of the profits to be made out of misery that will get women on to the soap boxes, but the realisation that they are suffering together with many others because of the lives they have been brought up to lead within the system and not because of personal failings which require the excuse of illness.

Yours sincerely
Sandra Britchell (Dr)
Chichester

Rape

* Dear Spare Rib,
When supporting the rally against James White's Bill on June 21st I was extremely disturbed to hear the largest ovation of the day given to Renee Short's attack on the suspended sentence given to a youth convicted of rape. For God's sake sisters, do you realise what you are doing? By reacting hysterically to gain revenge you are supplying those in power with justification to pass yet more repressive measures.

Rape is a complex subject. It is an act of violence figuring most highly in violent societies

(as in America). It is indicative of a whole range of problems, not least the sex-role nature of society. This is evident in that women do not commit rape.

Much has to be understood about rape. No answer will be found in harsh prison sentences.

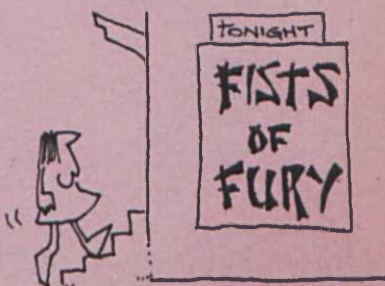
Yours sincerely
Liz Middleton
RAP Women and Crime Group

* Dear sisters,
Some serious suggestions on the fight against rape:

- 1) Should we form vigilante groups?
- 2) Should they be on call to protect any women against any man and/or should there be some procedure to check what actually happened?
- 3) What about violence between women? Women do differ in physical strength and respect for each other's autonomy.
- 4) If we are serious about the right to decide our own fate this actually means seizing power — not begging from a position of weakness for derisory concessions which can be (and are) withdrawn at any time.

We must study why revolutions have failed in the past or 'succeeded' only in producing societies where women are as powerless as before. The only critique I know of failed revolutions is Trotskyist Marxism. If the class struggle is a fact its dynamics have to be understood and adapted to our needs. It means using every available weapon — including ideas and playing off various classes of men against each other (let them be altruistic accessories about our cause for a change). "Fighting for a better society" unfortunately does mean a fight.

Jenny Dennan
High Wycombe



SHORTLIST

Please send any information to Jill Nicholls, Shortlist, Spare Rib, 9 Newburgh St, London W1A 4XS.

events

Gay Wives and Mothers Disco
September 6 at 8pm at the Sols Arms pub, Hampstead Rd, London NW1.

WLMNIS
The first six monthly meeting of the Women's Liberation Movement National Information Service is on September 13. To discuss (1) the newsletter, (2) finance. At 24 Mexborough Drive, Leeds 8.

SWAPO
South West African People's Organisation for the Liberation of Namibia is holding a public meeting September 24 at 7.30 in the NUR Hall, Euston Rd, London NW1. Putuse Appolus of the SWAPO Women's League and a leader of the youth league are speaking. Women are playing a crucial role in this struggle.

Women's Aid
The next conference of the National Women's Aid Federation is on September 27-28 at their new address, 31 Clapham Rd, London SW8. Same phone number: 01-870 6850.

Women and Film Weekend
September 26-28 a weekend school on the work done so far on women and cinema - the history of women in commercial cinema and their exclusion from that area of production - and the theoretical problems involved in thinking about women and film. At the London International Film School, 24 Shelton St, London WC2. Cost £4.32p, students £2.66 (non-residential, no meals). Apply before Sept 12 to SEFT, 63 Old Compton St, London W1 (01-734 5455/3211).

Plans for a Women's Newspaper
The third one-day conference is on October 11 in Manchester. Come even if you missed the first two. Contact Joan, Essex Rd Women's Centre, 108 Essex Rd, London N1 for details.

NAC Conference
October 18-19 at Imperial College, Prince Consort Rd, London SW7. As important as the June 21 demo.

centres

Oaklands Women's Centre
The movement has the use of a house in Glasbury near Brecon (mid-Wales) from September onwards. It has 4 bedrooms, 3 living rooms, ½ acre garden with room for camping and workshops, and is situated in beautiful surroundings in the Wye Valley at the foot of the Black Mountains. Two women will be living there permanently. They suggest using the house as a centre for study groups, weekend workshops etc, and also as a

retreat from the strains of city life. Once they've had some feedback from women's groups and individual women they'll work out formal arrangements and a booking system.

They need suggestions as to how to use the Women's Centre, volunteers to help with painting and repairs, and money to get it started. Contact Sue Minter and Marian Davis c/o the Workshop, 38 Earlham St, London WC2.

Aware
AWARE (Action for Women's Advice Research & Education) is running an information service within the South London Women's Centre, 14 Radnor Terrace, London SW8 (01-622 8495), Monday to Friday evenings 7-9.30. Help and advice on all subjects relating to women. Please enclose sae if you write, as they are desperately short of funds. They also need another voluntary worker one evening a week.

Workshop Sued
The Women's Liberation Workshop must raise £250 now because it's being sued for a debt. If we can't raise it, the workshop will have to close. Please send donations and cheques made out to the Women's Liberation Workshop, 38 Earlham St, London WC2. The London Women's Film Group is planning a benefit - watch *Time Out* for time and place.

projects

East End Creche
The Half Moon Theatre is a community theatre, trying to do things with women. It's difficult for women to go out in the evenings or get involved in the community when they've got children to look after. So the Half Moon plans to start a creche for all local women and their children, not just those using the theatre. It'll be open all day till midnight in an old wine house next door to the theatre. Someone has agreed to work there full-time, but she needs pay, and the whole project needs money. Contributions and offers of help to May Hobbs, Half Moon Theatre, 27 Alie St, London E1 (01-480 6465).

Fertility Rights
Fertility Rights has already started to produce material criticising population control from a women's liberation point of view. This could be useful in the movement and helpful for school and college teachers - geography, general studies and sociology.

Fertility Rights wants to set up an information network to make this material available and develop it further. So far it has general bibliographies of work already done in this country by Oxfam, Vocad etc, and some articles from the US (*Emerging Population Alternatives*) which could

be copied and circulated.

If you want to receive articles or contribute to the research, contact *Fertility Rights*, c/o *Spare Rib*. There could be a meeting in October for those who write expressing an interest.

Pamphlet Pool
The Prisoners' Human Rights Committee is willing to collect and redistribute women's liberation literature, old *Spare Ribs* etc to prisoners' families and friends, women whose geographical and social position makes it difficult to contact women's groups. Send any books, pamphlets, magazines you've finished with to the Prisoners' Human Rights Committee, 29a Hornsey Rise, London N19.

Women's Groups in Wales
"At the Welsh Women's Liberation Conference in June one of the workshops was on 'The Isolation of Rural Woman'. Several of us live on small-holdings or in isolated cottages with little or no contact with other women interested in the women's movement. We decided to: (1) meet once a month, in each others' houses, in a different place each month; meetings will sometimes be too far away to make, but most women should be able to get to most meetings; (2) use this address - Geulan Felen, Pentre Cwrt, Llandysul, Dyfed - as a contact address and clearing house for any women not able to get to these meetings or to any of the established groups in Cardiff, Swansea or Aberystwyth. Write or phone Llandysul 3407."

films

An Egg Is Not A chicken
A 15-minute film by women in the Independent Newsreel Collective of the fight for the right to abortion. Exciting starting-point for meetings. Distributed by the Other Cinema, 12-13 Little Newport St, London WC2 (01-734 8508).

One Two Three
A film about Dartmouth Park Hill child-care centre, the first to be funded by a local council and controlled by parents (see *Spare Rib* 17).

32 minutes, colour, 16mm. Produced by Sue Crockford. Distributed by Contemporary Films, 55 Greek St, London W1 and Liberation Films, 6 Bramshill Gdns, London NWS.

campaigns

Legal and Financial Independence
The group still has copies of their pamphlet *The Demand for Independence* (10p plus postage) and they are willing to talk to other groups about the demand. Contact 7 Killieser Ave, London SW2.

Working Women's Charter
September 13 at 2pm in Room 2D, University of London Students' Union, Malet St, WC1. General meeting for the Working Women's Charter Campaign. To exchange ideas and information. Reports from the Co-ordinating Committee and the Sub-committee set up at the recent London conference, and from local groups working around the Charter. If you want to give a report, bring it along.

Reports of the London Region Conference are available for 10p and a foolscap sae. If you'd like to be informed of future activities send subscription of £1 to WWCC, 49 Lowther Hill, London SE23 1PZ (01-690 5518).



From *Snakes and Ladders*

Fair Play for Children
A co-ordinating body to help improve play facilities for children. Will publish a newsletter to keep members up to date with the progress of the campaign. Has recently published *Standards of Play Provision*, which sets out advisory standards for play space, and *Use of Schools and Similar Facilities* - both available for 20p plus postage from Fair Play for Children, 237 Pentonville Rd, London N1.

British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign
BWNIC calls for the withdrawal of British troops and the ending of the union between Great Britain and Northern Ireland; it believes there can be no military solution to the problems in N.Ireland. The London group meets for discussion and action on the first Tuesday of every month at 6 Endsleigh St, WC1 at 7.30pm. All welcome.

Baby Foods Action Group
Campaigning to restrict the commercial promotion and distribution of powdered milk in the Third World and the West (see *Spare Rib* 34, 37). They research and publish information on the milk multinationals and their relations with the governments and institutions of the countries where they operate. For a leaflet suggesting ways you could help, or to get on their mailing list, contact 103 Gower St, London WC1E 6AW (01-387 3710).

Transsexual Action Organisation
A transsexual is a person who wants to change, is changing or has changed

her/his sex of birth. TAO aims to give advice and information to transsexuals and their friends and relatives, organise meetings and groups, encourage co-operation between transsexuals and doctors, social workers and psychiatrists, campaign for equal rights under the law so that female-to-males can have full legal rights as men and male-to-females full legal rights as women.

TAO has produced an excellent leaflet *Transsexual Information* – very matter of fact and friendly, with details of the legal position of transsexuals, possible hormone treatment and surgery, and reading lists. 10p plus postage from TAO, c/o Peace Centre, 18 Moor St, Queensway, Birmingham BA 7UH (021-449 8305).

pamphlets

Snakes and Ladders '75

A directory of play, parks and outings for children and their parents living in and around London. Compiled by Westminster Play Association; available from Children and Youth Action Group, 16-20 Strutton Ground, London SW1 for 30p incl. postage.

National Lesbian Newsletter

First issue out now, with news, views, groups and information. Articles and ideas needed for the next issue. Subs. £1 a year, to Maggie Sellers, 31 Dunlop Ave, Lenton, Nottingham.

The Moon for Dinner

Changing Relations . . . Women in China

by Sue O'Sullivan

45p, 46pp.

"In our bowls we could see the reflection of the moon for our dinner." Sue O'Sullivan went to China in Spring 1974. Here she describes what she saw and how she understood it. She's particularly interested in women's work, health and sexuality – provisions like two days off work a month if you suffer from menstrual cramps, such sexual division of labour as does still exist ("an area in the middle, poised between home and production"), the apparent absence of homosexuality. People she talks to believe that problems raised by feminism can be dealt with in theory by Marxism-Leninism, Mao-Tse Tung thought, and in practice by political struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat. She speaks to the Chairwomen of a local women's association who answers carefully questions on childcare, housework and men, but overflows about the fields they are walking through – a new strain of wheat or a new electrically run water pump.

Available from Sue O'Sullivan, 9 Stratford Villas, London NW1.

Mothra

The name of a benevolent Japanese monstress. And of a new magazine of prose, poetry and pictures by women in London, Paris and San Francisco, put together and printed by hand (in brown ink) on the Mothra Press, 158 Grafton Rd, London NW5. Send some money.

Returned Volunteer Action News

How does 'development' relate to us as women? Women who've done voluntary work abroad look at women here – supposedly receiving 'aid' this International Women's Year – and in the Third World. RVA membership £2.50 p.a., but this special issue of the newsletter free on request to RVA, 26 Museum Chambers, Little Russell St, London WC1.

Management Attitudes and Practice towards Women at Work

Audrey Hunt, Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, Social Survey Division, HMSO £5. This survey was carried out for the Department of Employment in 1973 "to find out in what fields differences in conditions and opportunities exist between men and women, and to define attitudes to these differences". Singularly unexciting and tedious to read, it contains much useful information about managerial prejudice against women workers. "A majority of the people who are responsible for the engagement of employees start off with the belief that a woman is likely to be inferior to a man as an employee." This is true of all occupations except office work and catering. "The leading way in which women are considered better is that they are less likely to get impatient with dull work."

Over two fifths of personnel managers (a strikingly high proportion of whom are men) think that a woman's place is in the home. Half

of them think it is not worth training young women for skilled work and three quarters would be opposed to having a male secretary. Fringe benefits, part-time work and the effects of protective legislation and equal pay are amongst the areas discussed. There's also an interesting section on managers' attitudes to their own wives going out to work, and the education and job prospects of their daughters and sons.

Jean Gardiner

Hecate

A Women's Interdisciplinary Journal

£1 a single copy, £1.80 p.a. (2 copies copies); 112pp

Women's studies in Australia – the second issue includes essays on prostitution, rape, ideology, Juliet Mitchell, some poems, and a bibliography of Sylvia Plath. The editors are interested in receiving any material relating to women; a small payment will be made to contributors. Contact GPO Box 99, St Lucia, Queensland, Australia 4067.

Women in Society/Women in Politics

Two packages from the Labour Party – coloured papers and some pictures in cardboard folders. *Women in Society* has some interesting material – a wallchart on "women in revolt" since the eighteenth century, reproductions of Labour League leaflets, fact sheets on trade unions etc. – but is heavily and uncritically biased towards the Labour Party. *Women in Politics* is all about how to get on within the party. Available

from Transport House, Smith Sq, London SW1. Price not marked.

arts

Gay Sweatshop

Gay theatre company needs scripts for theatres, schools, pubs, clubs, streets (sae to ensure return), and it needs members. Associate membership, £1.50 a year, entitles you to attend meetings and receive a regular newsletter. Contact Gay Sweatshop, c/o Marius Mansions, Marius Rd, London SW17 (01-673 5992).

Half Moon Gallery

Regular monthly exhibitions of photography, historical and contemporary, with particular promotion of work by young photographers working in Britain, and work of local relevance (they showed the exhibition of *Men* featured in *Spare Rib* 36).

Later this year the gallery intends to set up a photographic workshop consisting of 6 darkrooms, a communal finishing room, additional gallery space, a seminar/meeting place, a print/book shop and, in conjunction with the Half Moon Theatre, a small cafe.

The gallery, open free, needs £300 from public donations to survive this year. You could become a "Friend of the Half Moon Gallery" for £2 a year, £1.50 for students. If/when the workshop materialises, you'd be able to use the darkrooms very cheaply. Cheques to the Half Moon Gallery, 27 Alie St, London E1 (01-480 6465).



From *The Moon For Dinner* – Changing Relations . . . Women in China

WHY DO WE SAY 'ABORTION: A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE'?

20,000 people marched to defend the 1967 Abortion Act on June 21 against an Abortion (Amendment) Bill now in Parliament. If passed, Labour MP James White's bill would severely restrict the grounds for legal abortion. 80% of the abortions now performed would become illegal.

Under two of the main clauses of the present law, a woman is allowed an abortion if two doctors agree that continuing the pregnancy involves a greater risk of injury to her or her children's physical or mental health than an abortion. In making this decision the doctors may take "present or foreseeable future" environment into account. This clause, which has come to be known as the 'social clause', has given women a measure of control over their own bodies. It has enabled women to say to their doctor: "I want an abortion for this and this reason — my housing situation, or the size of my family."

But abortion is still the doctor's decision. We do not think that women should have to demonstrate inadequacies in their social situation in order to be allowed an abortion. For under the guise of objective neutrality doctors are making value judgements about a woman's social competence. Because we demand the right to control our own fertility, we think the existing legislation should be amended to grant women rather than doctors the right to decide.

We do not think that abortion should be used as a substitute for contraception. But it will probably always be necessary for women to have abortions, as there is still no contraceptive which is both 100% effective and which all women can use. If abortion is not freely available when contraception fails, women will be even less able to control and plan their lives than at present. A working woman's child care arrangements, which may have taken years to work out, can become meaningless if she is forced to have another child.

We demand that abortion be performed without inducing the guilt that most women experience. Yet we ourselves are presented with contradictions in our own thoughts and feelings. We may be frightened by the assertion that abortion is murder.

It is thus important to remember that the foetus is completely dependant on the woman in whom it develops. By saying "a foetus is not human" we mean that life, in its biological and social sense, could not be sustained outside the womb.

It is on this basis that we argue the woman's right to choose. The anti-abortionists' imprecise use of the phrases "respect for life" and "rights of the unborn child" masks their complete disregard for the life of the adult women in favour of the biological life of the foetus.

In campaigning to retain and extend the 1967 Abortion Act, we clarify our own demands. The demand 'Abortion — A Woman's Right To Choose' represents one facet of women's struggle for the right to control their own bodies. Our fight for self-determination requires the availability of free and effective contraception and demands the right to express our own sexuality, homosexual or heterosexual.

The social fact that women are systematically denied control of their own bodies is experienced in different ways according to class and race. Two articles in this issue of *Spare Rib* try to bring this out. In Puerto Rico 35% of the women of childbearing age have been sterilized. Cypriot girls in London are being kept forcibly ignorant of contraception.

We are opposed to all forms of manipulation, whether forced sterilization, forced ignorance, forced pregnancy or forced abortion.

d
n
at
r
e
t
s
t
.

Black women in South Africa are among the most oppressed in the world. And the over-riding cause of their oppression is the apartheid system.

They suffer from all the forms of discrimination and powerlessness that come from being at the bottom of the heap. Moreover, under South African legislation black women are denied basic human rights such as the right to live with their husbands and provide a normal family life for their children.

FOR THEIR TRIUMPHS AND FOR THEIR TEARS by Hilda Bernstein shows how women have suffered from the cruelties imposed by the apartheid system — and how they have resisted.

For their triumphs and for their tears

WOMEN IN APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA
BY HILDA BERNSTEIN

ILLUSTRATED
50p

Available from: Information Department, International Defence and Aid Fund, 104 Newgate St., London EC1A 7AP

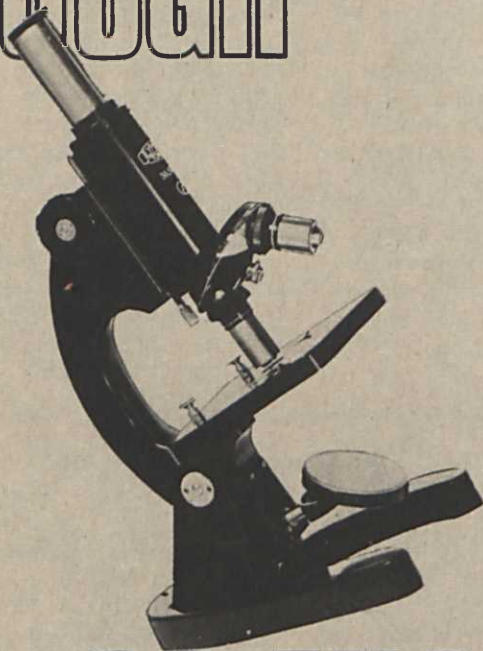
Please send me _____ copy/copies of **FOR THEIR TRIUMPHS AND FOR THEIR TEARS**

Name _____

Address _____

I enclose remittance of _____

SEEING THROUGH



SCIENCE

A Women's Liberation science group describes why they came together, their criticisms of science and the way it affects our lives, as an introduction to a series demystifying science.

Although *Spare Rib* regularly has reviews and articles on topics such as music, art, psychology and medicine, comparatively little attention has been given in the magazine to science and technology, and the ways in which they impinge on the lives of women. We are a group of women, several of whom work in laboratories, and we all have a background of scientific education. As women we are trying to understand our ambivalence towards science and technology — we believe that they contribute both to our liberation and oppression. We give below a brief analysis of the way we see this, and would like to develop our ideas in occasional articles in *Spare Rib*. Hopefully, readers will contribute their opinions as well.

In our society scientific knowledge is prized above all else as objective and unbiased, and people who do not have access to it are made to feel inferior. The way science is taught excludes most people and certainly most women from ever obtaining this knowledge. Too often women avoid thinking about science because the subject was badly taught at school, making the ideas seem boring and irrelevant, or even harmful to emotional needs. More importantly, it is seen as a boys' subject. Boys are actively encouraged to participate while girls feel that they are helpless onlookers.

Science uses a mystifying language of its own; those who felt unable to cope with it at school are completely excluded later on. Since the ideas could be expressed in simpler terms, why is an unnecessarily complex language used in science? We feel it's because science is an extremely powerful tool for the rulers in our society, but it will remain so only for as long as they can maintain control of it.

We are led to believe that a scientist is an objective expert, and His advice is taken as unbiased. But the belief that scientists are working only for our good leaves us vulnerable to manipulation if they are not. The myth of scientific neutrality is shattered by the

fact that well over 80% of the scientific research in this country is concerned with war weapons and the increase of profit. For example, the drug industry funds research not to produce new drugs but to bypass a competitor's monopoly on a certain compound by producing one of an almost similar nature. This revelation makes it clear how little effort is devoted to human welfare — capitalist science may pretend to be interested in people, but by its actions we see that its main interest is with profit. Yet whether scientific knowledge is of any real value in helping people in their day-to-day lives is not questioned.

Many advertisements use science or scientists to justify new wonder products or drugs. Even in the area of nutrition, which should be one of the most humanly relevant of the sciences, the food industry plays a subtle game of half educating us. We may learn enough about calories and proteins to be conned into buying special 'low calorie' slimming products or high protein foods 'for energy'. We are not taught enough to know which foods are essential to life — that all foods contain protein and calories — and how we can plan our diet accordingly. If we could do this ourselves then we wouldn't want to buy their special goodies.

Another example of the way that industry suppresses and misrepresents scientific information is the current situation with hair dyes. Hair dye manufacturers are trying to discredit recent independent evidence that most women's hair dyes contain a number of chemicals potentially capable of producing cancer (carcinogens) after being absorbed into the body through the scalp. In the United States the manufacturers had earlier succeeded in having hair dyes made exempt from food and drug legislation, and were not therefore required to carry out the expensive tests needed to show whether or not their products contained carcinogens. All the dyes are still on the market both in the USA and in this country.

Science is used not only to increase the profit margins of commercial enterprise but is also a powerful tool in the moulding of public attitudes. Extensive publicity was given to certain scientific results which were reported to demonstrate the evils resulting from mothers going out to work. Other research countering these findings has not been given equal coverage. The fact that the research and its publicity was launched immediately after the Second World War, when it was necessary to persuade women to move out of the factories and back into their kitchens, is no mere coincidence.

Today, biologists and psychologists have begun to develop an interest in sex differences in abilities. This work (some of which is funded by the Department of Employment and Science, and the Department of Employment and Productivity) purports to show that women and men are biologically suited to different tasks. This type of research is potentially dangerous to women because of the way the results can be interpreted and used against us, particularly in a period of economic recession when it will be necessary to reduce the number of people on the labour market. We have to challenge this kind of research and show how its methods are biased — how it only looks at that part of the evidence that will support its own interests.

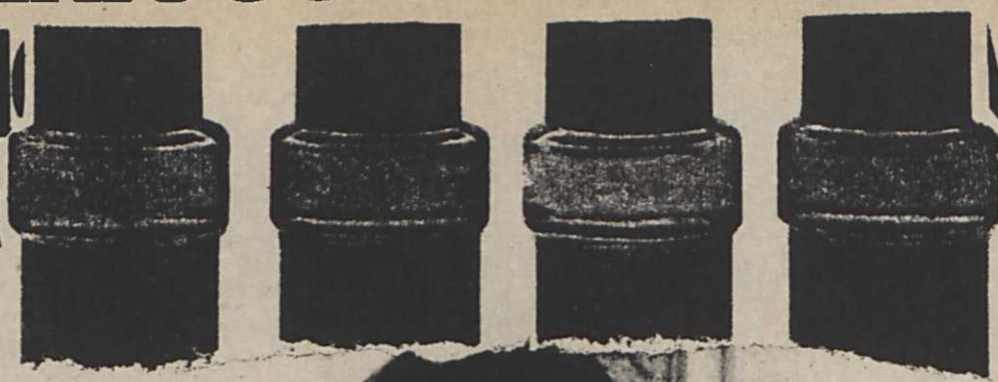
Yet while science is being used against us, some of us turn to it and herald it as an agent of our liberation. Shulamith Firestone for example, believes that our liberation depends on the development of technologies which will free us from what she thinks of as our fundamental oppression — childbearing. However, while test-tube babies might at some point be feasible, we must be cautious and ask who would be in control of such technology, and what their aims would be. In addition we would question the need for such measures, for childbearing is not inherently oppressive, it is just used as the reason for keeping women in their inferior role.

All too often we take science and technology for granted and do not stop to consider their nature. Analysis of the social context in which science takes place makes it clear that it is far from objective and neutral. Just as in the family, there is a hierarchy in science, with men at the top, fighting hard to maintain their dominance over ideas and practice.

We feel that if women knew more about science, what it is, and who controls it, we would be less open to manipulation and less willing to see it as the miracle worker to solve all our problems. We are going to write a series of occasional articles in *Spare Rib* attempting to demystify research, to talk for example about real nutritional needs, of the technology of reproduction and to discuss the ongoing research into sex differences and abilities. There are of course many more subjects we could try to cover and we would like *Spare Rib* readers to write and tell us which areas would interest them. □

Women and Science Collective

A SERIOUS STEP FORWARD
TROPICAN POWDER **MINI DISC** **SSON**



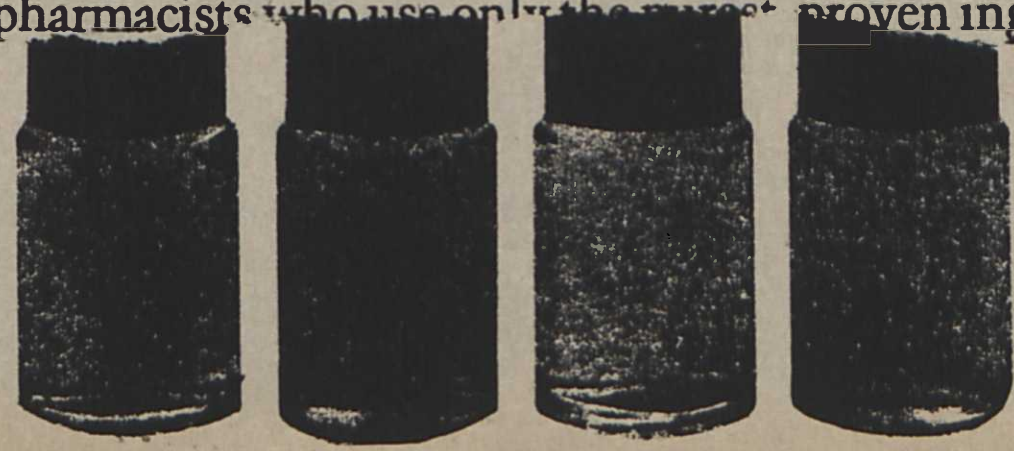
The Science of Beauty:
3 weeks from now
you could look
5 years younger.

MODEL GIRL. The first pure vitamin E oil in this country is 100% pure DL alpha-tocoph and the highest potency Vitamin E available 28,000 i.u. per 1 oz bottle at £3.80. Apply it wrinkles, frown lines, blemishes, scars and

Nature gave you beauty.
But only the science of
dermopharmacy can help

Stephan SKIN THERAPY 'A' cream represents completely new approach to the care of your skin. It formulated after years of research by Peter Stephan, the world's leading Cell Therapists. It's soft, smooth combines not only the latest developments in tissue

Vichy's preparations are conceived by dermatologists who understand its complexities and made pharmacists who use only the purest proven ingredients



WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT VIBRATORS

As the first company to introduce vibrators into the U.K. and having sold some hundred of thousands, we feel that we know more about them and their use than most.

The most important thing to remember is, **that they do work** — providing the woman has no violent prejudice against the use of artificial sexual stimulation. Some women find the shape off-putting. The phallic symbolism, deliberately created by the makers to emphasize its sexual usage, gives them the impression that it is meant to be used as an artificial penis, and indeed it can and is so used. Some women, however, find the effect — when used in this way — to be more numbing than stimulating.

The vibrator is designed and is far more effective when used for clitoral stimulation and its undoubted value for this purpose has been well established by Masters and Johnson in their book "An Analysis of Human Sexual Response." In the book they describe how, using a similar device, they were able to bring to orgasm women who have never before reached a climax.

These were extreme cases obviously. Normally, the vibrator is used to provide extra stimulation during love making and is particularly useful where the woman's response tends to be slow. And, of course, it is just as often used purely for personal pleasure.

Finally a word about quality. There are many different makes on the market today, all of similar design, ranging in quality from very good to absolutely useless. We have been selling the same model for seven years and have enough confidence in it to offer you our special 'money refund' service if you are not satisfied.

If you want to experiment with your own personal vibrator, just complete the coupon below.

Please send me a Harmony Personal Vibrator.
I enclose Cheque/P.O./Cash for £3.50 (including postage and packing).

Name:

Address:

Please
PRINT
Clearly

**Pellen Personal Products Ltd.,
Dept SR
1a West Green Road, London, N.15**

*All human beings are born free
and equal in dignity and rights.*

Adopted 10th December 1948. Forgotten 11th December 1948.

Ever since the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the persecuted minorities' lot has been improving at an astonishing pace. A snail's pace.

All men are born equal in dignity and rights.

Is it true for Asians in Uganda? For Africans in Rhodesia? For Jews in Russia? For Amerindians in South and North America?

Surprisingly, you can do something positive to help, even though so many world leaders have failed.

You can support the Minority Rights Group.

We work to secure justice for minorities suffering discrimination. We investigate denials of human rights and make the facts known to the world. But it costs money to prepare and publish our findings.

If you've ever felt frustration or disgust at the treatment of minorities, here's your chance to help.

Fill in this coupon now and send it off.

And with it, send what you can.

I'd like to help you help the underdog. Please accept the enclosed sum as a donation ☐
Please send me the following reports at 40p (\$1US) each including p&p:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Religions in the Soviet Union | ☐ East Indians in Trinidad and Guyana (55p) |
| ☐ The two Irelands: the double minority | ☐ Europe's Gypsies (55p) |
| ☐ Japan's minorities | ☐ Amerindians of S. America (55p) |
| ☐ The Asian minorities in E. Africa | ☐ The new position of Asians in E. Africa (55p) |
| ☐ The South Sudan and Eritrea | ☐ India and the Nagas (55p) |
| ☐ Crimean Tartars and Volga Germans | ☐ S. Vietnam's Montagnards (55p) |
| ☐ Blacks in Brazilian Society | ☐ S. W. Africa's Namibians (55p) |
| ☐ The Africans in Rhodesia | ☐ Burundi: Selective Genocide (55p) |
| ☐ The Basques | ☐ Canada's Indians (55p) |
| ☐ The Chinese in Indonesia (55p) | ☐ Race Law in U.K. and U.S. (55p) |
| ☐ Biharis in Bangladesh (55p) | ☐ The Kurds (55p) |
| ☐ Israel's Oriental Immigrants (55p) | ☐ The Palestinians (55p) |

Please send me your next 5 reports. I enclose my subscription of £2.50 (\$7US) ☐
or I would like a standing order for your future reports ☐

Name:

Address:

SR1



The Minority Rights Group

Benjamin Franklin House, 36 Craven Street, London WC2N 5NG

The Minority Rights Group is registered as a charity, and is eligible to receive covenants. Sponsors: Lady Butler, Erwin D. Canham, Milovan Djilas, Dr. Robert Gardiner, Lord Goodman, Lady Jackson, Sean MacBride, Gunnar Myrdal, Jayaprakash Narayan, Dr. Joseph Needham. Director: Ben Whitaker. Advertising Agency: Allardye-Hampshire Ltd.

NEWS



PUERTO RICO: 35 PERCENT OF WOMEN OF CHILDBEARING AGE STERILIZED

The case of the mass sterilization of Puerto Rican women was a subject of discussion in the United Nations in October 1974 and at the second meeting of the Russell Tribunal in February 1975. It was an attempt by Puerto Rican independence leaders and feminists to reveal yet another aspect of repression in this US Caribbean colony. Lynn di Pietro investigates.

Puerto Rico in 1975 is an island devoted to tourism, capital intensive industry, US exploitation of natural resources. 26% of the arable land is occupied by US military bases. The US has succeeded in forcing 40% of the population to migrate to US slums, and has sterilized 35% of the women of child-bearing age.

This figure represents the highest incidence of female sterilization in the world. India and Pakistan, which have public sterilization programmes, have five per cent and three per cent respectively. A 1968 study showed that of all the women sterilized in Puerto Rico two-thirds were sterilized between

the ages of 20–29 years, the average age being 26.

Key Problem Unemployment?

A secret document from an economic policy group commissioned in November 1973 by the Governor of Puerto Rico, entitled *Opportunities for Employment, Education and Training* sees Puerto Rico's key problem as unemployment. The members of the committee have devised two solutions: one to foster new jobs, and the other to "reduce the working sector of the population". The fact that 35% of the women have been sterilized indicates that they have opted for the latter.

The sterilization programme is to be carried out by a network of government agencies: Social Service, Health, Housing. The above-mentioned document sees the potential clientele as all the women of child-bearing age not yet sterilized. There are no restrictions as to age, number of children, or marital status.

The sterilization programme in Puerto Rico is a forced one. This does not mean that women are being dragged off the streets and forced to submit to sterilization.

The pressure is much more subtle, and suitably disguised in the rhetoric of health of mother and child: what used to be the ►

Family Planning has now been incorporated into the more comprehensive "Programme of Mothers and Children", according to the secret document, quoted above. "The programme of mothers and children of the Department of Health is the natural means of attracting the possible clientele. 78% of mothers give birth in hospitals, and 68% in public hospitals."

In many cases women are approached about sterilization immediately after giving birth, and while still in a weakened state. In other cases they are made to sign documents, often in English — a language which they are unlikely to read, before operations or deliveries giving the doctor authority to do whatever he or she sees as necessary for their "physical well being".

With families receiving state welfare benefits (59.6% of the Puerto Rican population live below the US government poverty level), pressure is brought to bear by the various government agencies on whom they are dependent. Forced into a situation in which they are dependent on local government for a subsistence existence, they are particularly vulnerable. Many accept sterilization without being fully conscious of what they are agreeing to and often after being given the impression that the operation is reversible. Sterilization advice is part of the follow-up to all hospital deliveries.

Under Pressure to Submit

Thus the very families that are forced into poverty because of a misdirected and profit-oriented economic system are asked to pay a further price by submitting their bodies to government dictates. There is no significant difference in the number of wives of middle and working class men who have been sterilized, but the middle class woman might take the decision to be sterilized because she wants to pursue some endeavour other than child-raising, and she has the education and ability to do so. It is the working class woman, often made to see child-bearing as her only contribution to society, who is under pressure to submit.

It is no accident either that sterilization is the preferred and encouraged method of birth control. It is not a case of a woman's right to choose: if it were the case other methods would be encouraged. Only sterilization serves the intended purpose of the whole exercise — depopulation.

It is interesting to note that safe abortions are virtually unobtainable in Puerto Rico, despite a US Supreme Court ruling in January 1973 confirm-



ing their legality. In practice abortions are only available in private hospitals, and then at a price of \$250 (£110) and up.

Compare this figure with a report in the *New York Times* of November 1974 that 19 free sterilization clinics have been opened in the San Juan metropolitan area. The clinics have been in operation at a top capacity programme of about 1,000 sterilizations a month.

Losing All Mystique

The object is not to condemn sterilization *per se* but rather to illustrate that sterilization can only be realistically analysed within a social framework.

As women we must take special notice of the sterilization programme in Puerto Rico, as it is indicative of a situation in which a government whose decisions are taken mainly by men has taken upon itself to control our bodies by determining for us when we should not reproduce. While traditionally our ability to have children has been used to create myths

about our inferiority in other endeavours, it is enlightening to see that when that ability is economically counter-productive it loses all mystique and becomes a "function" which must be disposed of.

The US government and the colonial government of Puerto Rico claim that the sterilization programme is meant to be socially beneficial: that it is an attempt to raise the general standard of living and reduce the unemployment rate, estimated at 30% by the Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce.

However, a brief analysis of the colonial economy of Puerto Rico demonstrates that the social and economic problems of Puerto Rico are not the result of overpopulation, but rather a distortion of the Puerto Rican economy by virtue of its colonial relationship with the US.

Since it acquired Puerto Rico at the end of the Spanish American war in 1898 — an aggressive war waged against Spain in the early days of US imperialism — the US government has controlled the economy

of Puerto Rico and developed it according to its own needs and not the needs of the island's people.

Before it became a US colony, the economy of Puerto Rico was an agricultural one in which the country produced coffee, tobacco, and sugar. The first thing the US did was to allow the coffee and tobacco cultivation to decline, and concentrated all investment on sugar — that product which the US needed but did not itself produce.

So from the beginning the Puerto Rican economy took a step backwards, the multi-culture agriculture was replaced by a monocultural one. A sugar plantation economy soon emerged, run by giant members of US sugar monopolies. This economy thrived on abundant sources of cheap labour, and so birth control was not needed.

In the early 1940s the US turned to Cuba, Hawaii and the Dominican Republic for their abundant sugar crop, because of their even cheaper sources of labour. Higher profits could be made elsewhere.

Operation Bootstrap

In an attempt to solve the economic problem which it had created, the US government initiated a programme called Operation Bootstrap, designed to create jobs for the Puerto Rican people. Operation Bootstrap coincided with the post-war economic boom when the United States had to supply a war-ravaged Europe with manufactured goods.

Companies were encouraged to relocate in Puerto Rico, the

benefits being a source of relatively cheap labour; an up to 17-year tax exemption, plus low overheads, expenditures in transport, and a ready supply of cheap energy.

With its agriculture devastated by lack of investment, large masses of Puerto Ricans had migrated to the cities to seek work. Operation Bootstrap failed. When tax exemptions ran out, and Europe recovered from the war, and when it became obvious that a cheaper

labour force could be exploited in Asia, US companies pulled out of Puerto Rico. Again, higher profit could be made elsewhere.

The United States was unable to provide an economic solution to Puerto Rico's problems of poverty and unemployment and still reap super profits, the key to all US involvement in the island. The real answer to Puerto Rico's economic, and hence social problems would of course challenge the colonial nature of

its economy, and its total dependence on the US. The US had to avoid recognising the real cause of the crisis, and yet still prevent the potential upheaval from the socially explosive unemployed.

The all-purpose answer was, and is, depopulation. It was during Operation Bootstrap that masses of Puerto Ricans were forced to migrate to the US slums. It was during this period, too, that the quiet beginnings of the sterilization programme were set up.

By 1950 16.5% of women over 20 had been sterilized. By 1965 the figure had reached 34%. Again there is an economic explanation for the drastic increase. As Operation Bootstrap was on the way out, highly mechanized, capital-intensive industry was on the way in.

Land, Water and Air Destroyed
Providing jobs is no longer a consideration. A third period of US exploitation has begun. Huge multinational petrochemical and pharmaceutical plants have spread over the island. These industries are noxious and polluting and to avoid outcries by US environmentalists they are located in Puerto Rico.

While they provide relatively little employment for the people they destroy the very basis of their existence — land, water and air. Rich mineral resources were discovered in Puerto Rico in the early 1960s by Kennicott Copper and American Metal Climax. Again, these industries are destroying huge tracts of land in the process, and providing few jobs.

Major oil interests are eager to build a superport for the refining of petroleum on the island. This superport has been refused by several major cities in the US because of pollution and the danger of oil spills.

So the picture becomes clear. US economic plans for Puerto Rico presuppose depopulation. People are counterproductive to US interests.

All humanitarian rhetoric aside, the sterilization programme does not benefit Puerto Rican women. It does not benefit the Puerto Rican people. It benefits multi-national companies. It is a genocidal programme aimed at the destruction of the Puerto Rican nation through the malicious manipulation of women by depriving them of their right to control their own bodies. □

Lynn di Pietro is a member of the Committee for Puerto Rican Independence. For more information about the Puerto Rican situation and about the women's struggle in Puerto Rico write to BM-CPRI, London WC1V 6XX, or phone 01-402 6894.



This photo of Puerto Rican independence demonstrators and the woodcut on p.17 are taken from the special Puerto Rican edition of the newspaper Triple Jeopardy: Racism, Imperialism, Sexism. 25c a copy or \$7.00 a year's subscription from Third World Women's Alliance, 26 West 20th St, New York, NYC 10011.

WOMEN'S HOSPITAL TO STAY OPEN?

Dramatic developments in the battle to save the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital for women from closure have meant its future looks a lot more secure than six months ago.

The Camden and Islington Area Health Authority has recommended that the hospital should continue as it is on its present site in Euston, a decision that now needs the seal of approval from Barbara Castle, Social Services Secretary.

This must be seen as a major victory for the EGA's staff and supporters, who have succeeded in mobilising public opinion against considerable odds and a health service establishment that takes a lot of convincing.

Unfortunately this decision has been negotiated as part of an economy package which means that other health projects have been scrapped to make way for it. Even so, money is still a big problem for the hospital.

The Area's recommendation was conditional on funds being made available at national level for upgrading and rationalising the EGA's services. This covers the inclusion of maternity beds, now provided at a separate unit, which it is proposed to close.

Given the cutbacks in government spending, Ms Castle may decide the country cannot afford the hospital. If she does, it will have to close, for the Area has made it clear that it will not finance a hospital that takes most of its patients from outside the local health boundaries.

This is why a petition signed by over 23,000 patients and supporters of the EGA was presented to the Prime Minister on July 29. The Elizabeth Garrett Anderson is still fighting to stay open. □

CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN TRIBUNAL MEETS THIS WINTER

An International Tribunal of Crimes Against Women will be held in Brussels in either November or December. The aim is to draw attention to the position of women throughout the world in International Women's Year.

A planning conference held earlier this year in Paris was attended by about 50 women, representing some twenty different countries. Women in Brussels managed to obtain a

grant from the Belgian government and the use of a conference hall with simultaneous translation facilities.

The underlying purpose of the Tribunal is to create international solidarity between women throughout the world and to draw attention to "the hypocrisy of Western governments who maintain that all is right with their world, thus ignoring the position of women in their own countries, and, in particular, turning a blind eye to the often extreme suffering of women in Third World countries."

The organising group hopes that accurate, up-to-date information on the social and economic disadvantages suffered by women everywhere will be provided in Brussels. The material to be handled is divided under four main headings: sexual; reproduction and medical; family and law; production (ie economic) and political.

Women with experience (or access to information) about cases within these headings and/or interested in getting information together should contact 5 Stonefield Mansions, Cloudeley Square, London N1, tel: 01-837 1507.

SNAGS IN TRAINING SCHEME FOR WOMEN OVER 35

No request aimed specifically at promoting women's employment has been submitted to the EEC's Social Fund since it was set up in 1972, even though the European Economic Commission is keen to encourage Social Fund applications for women over 35.

"But even in an area where they are soliciting applications there are snags", said *Look Europe* earlier this year. "Training schemes for women over 35 must also fit in with other criteria. They must be for people at present employed in a declining industry or living in an assisted area."

"As we pointed out in the European Parliament it is ineffective to promote training for women in areas or industries of high unemployment since women will only have a chance against men where there is plenty of work available."

EEC assistance is more likely when suggested schemes are integrated, ie provide vocational guidance, help with getting used to new jobs and child care facilities. *A guide to the regulations is available from Mrs Margaret Ellison at the Department of Employment, Branch EP (M) C, 32 St James's Square, London SW1Y 4JR.*



AN OUTLINE OF LABOUR HISTORY IN TWO HOURS

Mary Wollstonecraft died in childbirth in 1797, "without the least trait of literary pride or the apparent consciousness of powers above the level of her sex. This tribute we readily pay to her character, however adverse we may be to the system she supported in Politics and Morals."

This obituary is one of the oldest exhibits in the new National Museum of Labour History, which opened this May in Limehouse after nearly ten years of campaigning, collecting and fund-raising by the Trade Union Labour Co-operative Democratic History Society.

The Museum is housed on the ground floor of Limehouse Town Hall, opposite the Social Security office. "The major aim of this place," said assistant curator Terry McCarthy, "is to get away from the Oxbridge or LSE type of institution. We want it so that dockers, kids and claimants can walk in. Our first visitor was a local woman who couldn't read or write. She liked it because it was visual."

"People can get an outline of labour history, from Tom Paine to 1945, in two hours." But shortage of space combines with shortage of money to restrict the Museum's activity. 100,000 books and pamphlets, for which there is no room in Limehouse, are now being catalogued in Reigate, and the Museum exists

on voluntary donations only.

Dame Margaret Cole describes it this way: "This collection has grown to the present admirable extent entirely through the intelligent devotion of those who have guarded and served it."

"Help from the Women's Committee?"

Unlike last year's Exhibition of Labour History, presented by Brighton and Hove Trades Council to coincide with the TUC, there is no separate women's section. "There isn't the room," was Terry McCarthy's explanation. "If we could expand, we'd have a dockers' section, a women's section, and so on."

But diligent feminists can learn much about women's involvement in the labour movement here. "The banner was all done by hand," wrote J P Millar of the banner of the Central Labour College in the 1920s, *Educate Agitate Organise*. "Mrs Winifred Horrabin did some of the hand work but she may have had help from the women's committee of the college."

There is the story of Martha Smith and the 16 wives of Ascott Under Wychwood, Glos., who were imprisoned in 1872 for their opposition to agricultural employers using blacklegs.

The account is illustrated by 20th century postcards of local roads and villages captioned 'Here the women stopped the blacklegs', and a patchwork bedspread which they made in prison.

Stand 27 shows 'Three Famous Strikes: The Matchgirls 1888, the London Dockers' Tanner Strike 1889 and the Gasworkers' Strike 1889'. An etching of the matchgirls at work in Bow shows dark galleys and spasmodic shafts of light. It's juxtaposed with a contemporary (but effectively timeless) newspaper view of their strike: "It is rather cruel on the part of outside agitators to stir up helpless girls to enter upon conflicts in which it is simply impossible for them to be victorious."

Meanwhile a good front page headline from the *Daily Herald* of March 30 1928 stands out from the exhibition's rather cursory section on women's emancipation. Reporting the Second Reading of the Equal Franchise Bill, carried in the Commons by 387 to 10, the *Herald* announces that 'Ten Die-hards Vote Against Women's Bill'. □

Ann Scott
National Museum of Labour History (Admission Free), Limehouse Town Hall, Commercial Road, London E14, tel: 01-515 3229. 11am-4.30pm Tues, Wed, Thurs and Fri

HEATHROW: 400 STRIKE AT 'COMET HOUSE SLAVE CAMP'

The lowest paid staff at Heathrow Airport — 400 immigrant catering workers — stopped work in mid-July to demand parity with other ground services staff. The Asians, all Transport and General Workers Union members, prepare and clean the food trays for British Airways' flights in the overseas divisions. The strikers' demand for pay parity amounts to £2.50, which still leaves them with under £50 a week. They also want free issue

of safety shoes and an improved meal allowance: the 12½p allowance hasn't changed since 1955.

One full-time union official tried unsuccessfully to get them to return to work. But Bhashir Bhatti, T&G steward in the department — now renamed 'Comet House Slave Camp' — said: "Our people are in a beautiful form to fight." And by mid-August they were getting the same as the cleaners.

KEEPING THE GROWERS HONEST

A new labour law may be enacted for California farmworkers (see 'Farmworkers: Why We Boycott', *Spare Rib* 36).

The United Farm Workers of America (AFL-CIO) and the State of California's major agricultural interests took part in negotiations culminating in a compromise farm labour bill that both sides of the dispute support.

The bill guarantees farm workers the right to choose their own Union representatives through secret ballot elections. A special session of the California legislature is considering Governor Edmund G Brown's bill. UFW hope that the measure will be enacted in time for free elections this autumn.

UFW emphasise, however, that

until the law becomes effective the boycott of non-UFW grapes, head lettuce and Gallo Wine is necessary "to keep the growers honest and maintain their incentive for supporting the free election mechanism contained in the new law".

E.O.C STAFF TO BE RECRUITED FROM CIVIL SERVICE ONLY?

It seems that almost all staff in the Manchester headquarters of the Equal Opportunities Commission will be recruited from present Civil Service workers.

The Equal Opportunities Commission has the duties of "working towards the elimination of discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and keeping

under review the working of the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act".

"A staff of about 100 (including clerical support) will be required for the headquarters of the Commission by the end of 1975, about half of these in October. Further expansion is expected to take place in 1976", says a copy of the recruiting advertisement sent to *Spare Rib*.

"It is expected that certain of the senior posts will also be advertised nationally outside the Civil Service", the advertisement continues.

A woman worker in the Civil Service commented: "I feel this is very wrong. It's crucial for the success of the EOC that staff be drawn from as large a selection as possible of people with experience and interest in discrimination against women."

She suggested that people write to Betty Lockwood, EOC

head, Home Secretary Roy Jenkins and their MPs about it.



Cartoons on this page are Nuria Pompeya's illustrations to Lydia Falcon's book *Cartas a una idiota española* (Letters to a Stupid Spanish Woman)

ABORTION NEWS

SELECT COMMITTEE HEARINGS CONDEMN WHITE'S BILL

This is the last in our seven-part series. In Spare Ribs 32, 34-38 we traced the development of James White's Abortion (Amendment) Bill, which if passed would severely limit the grounds for legal abortion, to the point at which the Department of Health had presented its evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee. Now read on...

Illegal Abortion Dies Out

The Department of Health damned James White's bill. So did the Home Office deputation, which arrived next. It pointed out that back-street abortion was declining fast. In 1969, 257 abortion offences were known to the police. In 1973, the total was down to 36. In 1969, 52 people were actually found guilty of abortion offences. In 1973, a mere seven. But the Home Office admitted that the police did experience difficulty in "obtaining the co-operation of the women concerned". It did not know why this was. Perhaps the (foolish) women felt "a debt of gratitude to the doctor concerned". So prosecutions were difficult — as they always had been in abortion cases.

The Home Office was followed by the British Medical Association, supported by the other medical organisations including the psychiatrists, the anaesthetists and the pathologists. They thought James White's bill was awful, and tore through it leaving hardly a clause intact. The anaesthetists went so far as to say, "not only is the Bill unnecessary, it represents a positive public disservice." The following week it was also denounced by that normally most conservative of bodies, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. "I would be quite happy, personally," said Sir Stanley Clayton, President of the College, "if the 1967 Act were left as it is." MP David Steel of the Select Committee asked Sir Stanley how far his view was the view of the College. At this point, Sir Stanley made the riveting disclosure that the

Council of the Royal College had voted on the matter. The vote had been 28:2 in favour of leaving the 1967 Abortion Act unchanged.

SPUC's Opinion Survey

As long ago as 1969, SPUC had an opinion survey carried out for it by Gallup. SPUC speakers, even now, quote from this survey, very selectively admittedly, and always concealing the date. Alas, the most interesting question and answer from this Survey are always omitted by SPUC speakers. So here they are:

"When deciding law on abortion, do you think MPs should or should not take into account the views of such bodies as the BMA and the RCOG?"

"Should take into account	77%
Should not take into account	7%
Don't know	16%

Enter the Baby Burners

Next arrived those star studded 'virginal and pristine' (to quote Leo Abse MP) authors of *Babies for Burning*. This was indeed a most entertaining occasion. Everyone turned up for this first (and probably last) night. Even Mr Allan Learmonth, the owner of the ill-fated publishing house, Serpentine Press, now in the hands of a Receiver. Instead of making Learmonth's fortune, the book appeared to have done him a power of no good. However, he put a brave face on it all, kissing everyone within range, even members of *The Sunday Times* team, and a faintly startled (bearded) member of SPUC. The Committee Room was packed as never before. The session lasted more than three hours. The main points to emerge were as follows:

1) The MPs on the Select Committee had been circulated with 'transcripts' of tapes said to be in the possession of Susan Kentish and Michael Litchfield (see discussion of this issue in *Spare Rib* 37 which turns out to have been prophetic in more ways than one).

2) These transcripts had been prepared for the MPs by none other than Sue Kentish herself — which was very obliging of her.

3) The tapes that mattered were unfortunately missing. They were either in transit, mislaid, 'almost undecipherable', in the cellars of the *News of the World*, with the police, or anywhere but here — in Committee Room 6, where they were wanted. The tape of Mrs Pauline Crabbe, distinguished Brook Advisory counsellor, did not exist. Sue had accidentally switched it off while recording. "Is it not strange", mused Dr Maurice Miller MP, "that the parts of

your book which really caused great consternation are the very parts for which you either do not have tapes, or we cannot hear for some reason or another?"

4) As for the famous urine tests which purported to show that the London pregnancy testing agencies were crooked — well, there was no evidence that the urine she gave them was her own. Commented one sceptical MP: "So we have only your word for it?" (No one, happily, was tactless enough to mention that in an earlier version of this tale, published in *News of the World*, it was Mr Litchfield's urine that was declared pregnant, not Miss Kentish's.)

5) The 'Nazi' books which allegedly lined the bookshelves of one of the sinister characters of this drama did not in fact exist. Oh dear, said Michael Litchfield. Well, I am sure there are titles in existence very like them. Sir George Sinclair, an impassive Tory with silver hair, gazed at Litchfield, unable to believe his ears. After all, Litchfield said on several occasions, this was "just journalism" — not intended for a court of law. (One interpretation of this remark is that any old rubbish will do for *News of the World*. He may even be right.)

6) As for Litchfield's phantom Pulitzer Prize for journalism, well he would have something to say about this one day. But not now.

7) Sue Kentish had trotted around London being endlessly internally examined, and was declared pregnant when she was not. Unfortunately, she had told a few lies in the process, which may just possibly have contributed to the misdiagnosis. She had assured her doctors that she had missed taking the pill — when she had not. She had assured them that she had missed a period or two — when she had not. And she had clinched it by showing them the doubtful urine... and so on. And she succeeded in deceiving them. Had they realised she was not a girl in distress but a journalist on the make, they might of course have been less gullible.

8) The authors complained about two Brook doctors to the General Medical Council. The General Medical Council considered the matter and informed the two Brook doctors that there was no case for them to answer. *The Times* letters editor censored this news (naturally). In the event, the news editor published it, which was amusing.

9) It almost appears as if Miss Kentish had had all those internal examinations for nothing (except a few quid from *News of the World*, one must suppose

— unless of course the whole exercise was undertaken from motives of Christian charity; which is always possible, given the authors' well-known involvement with SPUC and Women for Life).

The following week, addressing the Association of Liberal Lawyers, David Steel MP uttered the under-statement of the year. Litchfield, he said, was a man who is "careless about the truth".

Abortion in Italy

Members of the anti-feminist lobby get very upset when it is suggested that in those Roman Catholic countries where abortion is still illegal, there are many more abortions, abortion injuries and abortion deaths than in this country. At a recent National Abortion Campaign meeting in Haringey, Nicholas Fogg of SPUC and Melanie Dickinson of Women for Life denounced this view with great fervour. On July 21 Dr Margaret White of The Mothers' Union shared a page in *The Times* with Mrs Mary Whitehouse. She 'proved' this view could not be correct because Italian official statistics do not show any abortion deaths

NAMIBIA



SOLIDARITY WITH SWAPO AND THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA
SWAPO women's tour of Europe during International Women's Year

PUBLIC MEETING
Women's Role in the Liberation Struggle of Namibia
24 SEPTEMBER 7.30pm
NUR Hall, Euston Road,
London NW1
(Euston Sq. & Warren St. undergrounds)

Speakers: Putuse Appolus, SWAPO Women's League. Representative of the SWAPO Youth League.
Meeting organised by the Namibia Support Committee, 21/25 Tabernacle Street, London EC2.
Telephone 01-588 4342.

ABORTION NEWS

SOUTH LONDON CURATE: "I feel I know the mind of God"

separately.

The following two press reports, one old and the other new, throw some light on the abortion situation in Italy:

"Estimates of the number of illegal abortions each year range from 800,000 to 3 million. The tiny Radical Party, of which Signor Fortuna (noted Italian abortion law reformer) is also a member, claims that at least 20,000 women a year die as a result; although the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* has retorted that only about 11,000 women between 15 and 45 die in this way in Italy each year." (Reuter report: "Pro-Abortion, Anti-Vatican Campaign". *The Guardian*, 12 February, 1973)

"Illegal abortion is still the chief method of birth control practised in the country which contains the seat of the Roman Catholic Church. The number of illegal abortions carried out is unlikely to be as low as the Italian health ministry's estimate of 800,000 per annum. It may even be higher than the estimate by the World Health Organisation of one and a half million abortions in 1974 — more than the number of live births." (David Willey, Rome correspondent for the BBC in *People* Vol 2 No 3 1975 published by International Planned Parenthood Federation, London)

Thus, even the lowest estimates for illegal Italian abortions suggest that there are eight times as many abortions in Italy as among British women. Does this alarm and agitate the Sanctity-of-Life lobby? Not at all. So long as abortion is hidden under the carpet, dangerous and expensive, all is reasonably well. Only when it is open, safe and cheap does it become really morally objectionable — because then women are no longer being punished for sin.

Oh Mother!

In June, *Mother* magazine turned out an article by 'Joan Williams SRN SCM' which read as if it had been lifted straight from a *Life* propaganda leaflet. On 18 July, the editor admitted to one correspondent that some of the facts quoted in the article were either untrue or of doubtful origins. It will be interesting to see how many of these 'facts' are corrected in due course.

Last Word

"I wish these amateurs (i.e. women) would realise that we are not trying to change the 1967 Act. We are only trying to improve it . . . We want to make sure that the people who require abortions get them." James White MP (*Scottish Daily Express* 16 June 1975). □

Liz Warren

The message *Abortion is Murder: Think Twice! Think Christian!* appeared on a hoarding outside St Stephen's Church in Lewisham the day before a South East London National Abortion Campaign march at the beginning of June.

Feeling that this display, bearing such an emotive message and unsupported by any facts or argument, was morally questionable, local NAC members wrote to the vicar on June 6 and asked to discuss the issue.

Having not heard from Rev Wright, NAC organised a peaceful demonstration on Sunday June 15 (top right) and leafletted the congregation (middle and bottom right).

Meanwhile the Bishop of Kingston, whom NAC had written to at the same time as the vicar, had seen the logic of their letter describing the original poster as "a merciless accusation".

The vicar suggested a meeting in mid-July. After NAC supporters painted the poster brown at the end of June, another went up: *Abortion Destroys*. This one too had been taken away by the time two women met the vicar.

They did not want to argue about abortion as murder but to discuss the display of 'strongly held conviction in a public place'. Unfortunately the curate was there too (below, at June 15 demonstration). His comments included: "I feel I know the mind of God — or at least a part of it".

Rev Wright was reminded of the current fight over the Abortion (Amendment) Bill. "Oh, I hadn't thought of the poster as political", he mused.

One NAC member feels that the aim — of getting the poster down — was achieved through a mixture of defacement and "the force of hierarchy — the vicar's answerability to the bishop."



ABORTION NEWS

160,000 GOOD REASONS A YEAR?

"On the subject of abortion the editorial policy of *Mother* supports the principle that human life is sacred and should not be destroyed without good reason", wrote Catherine Munnion on July 16.

Ms Munnion, editor of IPC's *Mother*, whose June issue carried an anti-abortion article (see Liz Warren's piece in this issue), was replying to Jill Brownbill of the National Abortion Campaign.

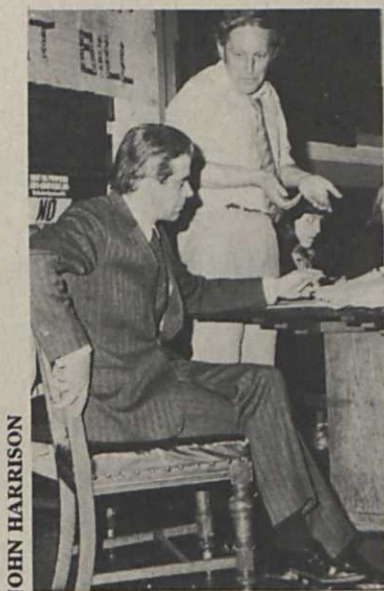
"There may well be good reasons for some mothers to choose an abortion, but we do not believe that there are 160,000 good reasons each year, in this country alone — the situation since the Abortion Act of 1967 took effect", the letter continues.

"Our readers have responded in varying ways to Joan Williams' controversial article, and I am at present considering what further editorial space I can devote to this issue."

60-70 NAC supporters had picketed IPC's London headquarters earlier in July to protest the many distortions in the *Mother* article.

NAC London Co-ordinating Committee is going to take *Mother* to the Press Council on

grounds of inaccurate journalism. Meanwhile, Professor Peter Huntingford of the London Hospital, an active NAC supporter, is preparing a reply to Joan Williams' article. □



JOHN HARRISON

Professor Peter Huntingford (seated left) at a National Abortion Campaign meeting in Deptford, South London, in June. Speaker is Christopher Price MP (Labour Lewisham West) with Jill Brownbill chairing.

At this meeting Prof Huntingford said that he had been privileged to work with and learn from women

Britain, but because this bill affects the countless women who have been forced by prohibitive Irish legislation to seek abortions in England.

"We are building a campaign for a repeal of our own repressive legislation. It is not enough for the hypocritical Irish government to turn a blind eye to the social fact that Irish women have chosen to have abortions and thereby continue to rely on what progressiveness exists in British law. We demand that our right to choose be recognised in Ireland as well.

Irish Women United can be contacted c/o 32 Clarinda Park East, Dun Laoire, Co. Dublin.

NOW IRISH WOMEN DEMAND RIGHT TO CHOOSE

DUBLIN: Irish Women United, a campaigning organisation based in County Dublin, sent an open letter of solidarity to the National Abortion Campaign immediately after the national demonstration on June 21.

"As the national Irish women's movement we extend this support not only in an act of solidarity with our sisters in

LABOUR PARTY NEC SUPPORTS 67 ACT

The Labour Party National Executive confirmed its support of the 1967 Abortion Act in the following motion submitted by MP Renee Short and carried on July 23:

"The National Executive Committee, while fully recognising the right of freedom of conscience in this matter, welcomes the statement of the National Labour Women's Advisory Committee submitted to the Select Committee on the Abortion (Amendment) Bill; fully supports the Advisory Committee in its criticism of the Bill; (and) endorses the Advisory Committee presented to the 1974 Labour Women's Conference. □

SHOVING GOVERNMENT INTO ACTION

HUDDERSFIELD: One reason for voting for the Second Reading of James White's bill was revealed when MP Richard Wainwright (Colne Valley) wrote to one of his constituents in June.

Wainwright, who describes himself as "a keen supporter of Abortion Law Reform", and one who "took every trouble to support David Steel's bill" (which became the 1967 Abortion Act), wrote to Liz Heywood of Holmfirth:

"Like a great many MPs I have been utterly shocked at the dilatory behaviour of the present government in failing to carry out, by purely administrative action, the relatively small but nevertheless urgent changes of detail recommended by Judge Lane's Committee.

"It was in order to shove the Government into action after every other attempt to rouse it had failed that some of us voted in such a way as to get a Select Committee set up to examine the Abortion (Amendment) Bill.

"I have no intention of voting for further stages of the Bill, and I do not think there is any real danger of it becoming law. But we have at least got the Government moving on what should have been tackled about fifteen years ago", the letter ends.

Spare Rib and Liz Heywood would be interested to hear if there are other MPs who voted similarly. If this motivation is at all general, wrote Liz Heywood to *Spare Rib*, "presumably the whole business has been Parliamentary shadow-boxing; no doubt from the worthiest motives, but it's an interesting illumination of how the place works." □

ABORTION REPORT 'NOT ETHICALLY SOUND'

A report on abortion commissioned two years ago by the Church of England and the Methodist Church has been turned down because it was "thought to be too liberal".

This unpublished report was the result of 18 months' work by eight Anglicans and Methodists, four women and four men. It was discussed on February 28 by the Church of England's Board for Social Responsibility, one of several advisory bodies to the Anglican policy-making

General Synod.

The 18-member C of E Board, which includes only two women — a social worker and a freelance journalist — rejected the report for publication.

A short paper was then written by Giles Ecclestone, secretary to the standing committee which commissioned the report, and discussed at the Anglican Synod on July 2 and 3. The Synod, described by Giles Ecclestone's secretary at Church House as "more representative of C of E thinking than our Board", voted to support James White's Bill.

Meanwhile, the Methodist Family Life Committee had discussed the report in March and "were all in favour apart from a few minor modifications", said Dr J Seakins, who chaired the working party. "But our hands were tied by the prior decision. The Executive felt that as joint party to the report, they had to abide by the C of E decision, though very reluctantly."

Doctrinal differences between the two Churches appear to be responsible for this divergence. Anglican theologians pronounced the report "not ethically sound", Dr. Seakins said.

"I think the Anglican Church saw reforms being introduced by changes in the law", he continued. "That if only one could state things more precisely, the problem might go away. I think that's a little naive."

"The Methodist approach is more personal and practical. Perhaps because of the way Methodism grew up — more in touch with the ordinary folk — we had to deal with ordinary people as persons. The C of E had more influence with law-making."

The Methodist approach, which is opposed to abortion on demand, "would be more in line with counselling — that a decision on abortion be the best for the woman and her situation as a whole. The role of law is perhaps of secondary importance."

The two churches had decided to work together "to produce a reasoned response to the Lane Committee", as neither had adopted the extremist position of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Anglican document of 1965 *Abortion: An Ethical Discussion*, for example, moved towards the position which appeared in the 1967 Steel bill. A Methodist study group at the same time was particularly concerned with problems of backstreet abortion.

It now seems to Dr Seakins that "official co-operation is not a productive approach. It's very difficult to get consensus on what the basic questions are."

The Methodist church is meeting in August to discuss its own document, to be produced in the autumn. □

CLASSIFIEDS

JOBS

National Women's Aid Federation requires a co-ordinator to work with refugees for battered women. Much travel. Experience of Women's Aid preferable and of the Women's Movement essential. Apply in writing with the names of two referees to 31 Clapham Road, London SW8.

Student Christian Movement CONFERENCE CENTRE CO-ORDINATOR. We're looking for an energetic and capable organiser to co-ordinate the team running the self-catering conference centre at our national headquarters. Preferably with experience of running conferences and with an active concern for libertarian politics and radical Christianity. We are trying to establish this place as a learning centre for students and others, and an ability to communicate and explore ideas without being manipulative would also be important. S/he would live and work collectively out of the community based at the centre. Reasonable pay on a parity scale. Write or phone immediately for details to: Viv Broughton, SCM, Wick Court, Wick nr Bristol. Tel: Abson 3377.

FINANCE / ADMINISTRATION SECRETARY. The Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland is looking for someone to join its central team. This person would take responsibility for subscriptions, income accounts, budgeting and a variety of administrative functions as the back up person to a sabbatical student president. However, we are looking for someone who also has an interest in theology, politics and alternative life-styles and would be part of the overall development of SCM's ideas and activities. Opportunity to live as a member of the SCM community at Wick Court where the national headquarters and conference centre are located. Inquiries and applications to Dave Sinclair, SCM, Wick Court, Wick, nr Bristol (tel: Abson 3377).

ACCOMMODATION

WE WOULD LIKE to find two people and a child to live in our large house, share cooking, shopping, babysitting with us and our children. Also join in running food coop from the house. North London. Box no. 396

COMMUNITY, started 4 years ago and expanding, seeks new members preferably with capital. Present members into role sharing, low technology, crafts, music. SAE please for more info. Birchwood Hall, Storrige, nr Malvern, Worcs.

Mixed group trying to set up an active non-sexist community/commune in the country. Interested? Box no. 394

OXFORD, female student plus two school age kids urgently require accommodation. Preferably communal but anything considered. Please phone Molly, Canvey Island 5799.

SINGLE PARENT FEMALE 28 son 2½ seek pleasant accommodation south of the river, good work and character references, possibly share with someone similar. £50 a month maximum. 01-874 4114 Eve.

CENTRAL LINE. Happy liberated lady to share furnished c/h house facing park with another. Age 28-35 approx. preferred. Child welcome. Separate kitchen, lounge, bedroom. Available September. £78.00 p.m. Write Box no.395

People seek others to buy outright share large house South London. Must have/be able to borrow approx. £2,500 for own room/share communal living space and garden. Box no. 341.

Modernised pied a terre WC1 semi-basement bedsitter (wall bed, fitted carpets curtains etc) bathroom, kitchen/pantry overlooking plant area. Leasehold 36 years £8,750. Enquiries 01-278 1501

COURSES

The Second Sex: A study of feminist writing from Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan to Shulamith Firestone and Sheila Rowbotham. Abraham Moss Centre Manchester. Tuesdays 11.30-1.00pm from Sept 16th to Christmas. Phone 061-740 1499 for details.

EVENTS

Public meeting NAMIBIAN WOMEN IN THE STRUGGLE. Two women from the South West Africa People's Organisation will be on an extensive speaking tour of Britain Sept 23-Oct 4 to increase British support for SWAPO which is fighting for the freedom of Namibia from the South African military occupation. **PUBLIC MEETING, 24 SEPTEMBER, 7.30 pm, NUR HALL, Euston Road, London NW1.** (Euston Sq or Warren St tubes).

S.W. REGIONAL WOMEN'S LIBERATION CONFERENCE in Bath Sat Sept 27th. Tel: Bromham (Wilts) 555

S.W. REGIONAL WOMEN'S AID CONFERENCE in Bath Sunday Sept 18th. Tel: Bath 65120

GROUPS

MERTON Women's Group meets Thursdays 8.30. Phone Joan 542 7699, or Fiona 640 6393

ILFORD Women's Group open meeting 8pm September 17th. 36 Argyle Road. Contact: Patsie 478 5454. All women welcome.

WANSTEAD / WOODFORD area group meets again first week September. Details 9 Northumberland Ave, E12 5HF

Homosexual/Bisexual women join the Campaign for Homosexual Equality. CHE is your voice - make it louder! Meetings and socials throughout Britain. Send SAE 9 x 4" to CHE (332) 28 Kennedy St, Manchester 2

BOOKS ETC.

WOMEN'S BOOKS CATALOGUE. A catalogue of secondhand & out-of-print books by, for & about Women and the women's movement is available at your University, Polytechnic and local Central libraries. Ask to see a copy. Enquiries/info. Anna Duhig (Feminist Books) 01-733 9033

MOVE Publication Bristol Gay Women's Liberation Sample 20p Women's Centre, 11 Waverley Rd, Redland, Bristol

Anti-Apartheid News, Journal of the Anti-Apartheid Movement. The only newspaper devoted to reporting the facts of the situation in Southern Africa, and the campaigns being waged internationally against white supremacy. Ten issues per year, annual subscription rates £1.35 UK from 89 Charlotte St, London W1P 2DQ.

New Design WL Badge 14p (incl. postage). Stop Rape American pamphlet on self-defence for women (illustrated) 26p (incl. postage) from Sisterhood Books c/o 22 Great Windmill St, London W1

FOR GAY WOMEN: THE GIRL'S GUIDE 1975. The all new, pocket size, discreet, international bar/club guide and complete directory: organisations, centres, publications etc. All Britain plus 25 other countries. 1500 listings. £1.00 only from: The Girl's Guide, 103 Hammersmith Rd, London W14 (mail order only). Also at: Compendium, 240 Camden High St, NW1; Sterling's Bookshop, 57 St Martin's Lane, WC2; Karmac Books, 56 Gloucester Rd, SW7. And on sale at the SAPPHO discos.

SAPPHO, the only lesbian feminist magazine in Europe, 40p inc post. 39 Wardour Street, London W1V 3HA. Meetings held every Tuesday, 7.30pm upstairs room, The Chepstow Pub, Chepstow Place, London W2, off Westbourne Grove 40p admission for non-subscribers

Please send a large stamped envelope with all replies to Box numbers.

Women's Liberation Literature or any books. Send SAE for free book-list to H. Rutovitz, 31 Royal Terrace, Edinburgh.

WANTED

Copies of Ribs 1,2,7,17,21. Tish, 6 South St, Totnes, Devon

FOR SALE

KIDS Clothes made to order. Cushions too, in all shapes and sizes. Sue Pontet, 18 New Row, Perth PH1 5QA

WOMEN'S YEAR CARDS. Pack of 8 with envelopes 40p from Pynest Centre, Pynest Rd, Harlow, Essex

LOST CONTACTS

Niamh O'Sullivan please contact Rosie at Spare Rib urgently 01-437 2070

Woman from Sheffield who replied to Box no.341 please reply again

THERAPY

PRIMAL THERAPY write Jenny James, Atlantis, Burtonport, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Eire.

Woman psychotherapist (Jungian) now has vacancies Highgate area. Tel: 01-720 1667

SERVICES

Female/female exclusive introductions highly confidential service for release, friendship liberation etc. SAE - 'Lesbos and Ariadne', The Golden Wheel, Liverpool L15 3HT

Homosexual women and men can ring Icebreakers on 01-274 9590 every evening of the year between 7.30 and 10.30 to talk over their problems with other gay people

PERSONAL

Anyone like to try sharing work and rewards of small guest house and large garden, Somerset for a while. Practically no money in it but bed, board, and fairly good life in comfortable house, with garden full of bees, butterflies, ducks (not to eat), new laid eggs, compost grown vegetables and freedom from worst excesses of rat race. Preliminary meeting Bristol or London. Box no. 392

Recently my first love of two years told me she didn't love me anymore. Although my feelings for her have not changed, I would like the friendship of a mature sincere, understanding female under 35, interested in travel, theatre, books, history. No snorers or nailbiters please. I am 28 and live in north London. Please give your phone number. All letters will be acknowledged. Box no.391

Would American man like to marry English woman for mutual convenience? Debbie Box no.393

Lonely Femme Lesbian seeks similar Friendships-Partners. Anywhere BM/SORELLA London WC1V 6XX

Dave rejects male/female stereotypes, seeks humorous literary/musical woman comrade Manchester area. Box no. 371

Young couple would love to adopt baby write Carla Box no.381

If you want to join or start a group, find work, a travel companion, or a missing friend, start a household or share a house, have something to sell or swop . . . then run your own Classified Ad.

Copy date: September 3 for September 24

Please send a large stamped envelope with all replies to Box numbers.

Rates: 5p per word, 10p caps, £1.50 for semi-display (semi-boxed ad.) 50p for Box numbers

Payment: Ads. must be prepaid and sent to Spare Rib, 9 Newburgh St., London W1A 4XS. Please make all cheques and PO's payable to Spare Ribs Ltd.

Conditions: Spare Rib reserves the right to refuse any classified ads.

☐ Tick if Box number required

☐ Tick if Semi-display required

I enclose £ for no. of issues.

Name:

Address:

Print your ad below in block capitals, one word in each box. Underline any words you require in caps.

7		
10		
13		
16		
19		
22		
25		
28		
31		
34		
37		

As part of International Women's Year an International Women's Conference sponsored by the United Nations was held in Mexico in the second half of June.

1,300 delegates, many of them men, from the UN member states attended the official conference, and over 5,000 women, mainly from Mexico and the USA, took part in a Tribune on women at the same time.

The head of the official Mexican delegation was a man — the Minister of Justice, Ojeda Paullada. The previous week two members of a student guerilla group, trying to escape from the police, mingled with the crowd at a dog show at the university. They were shot dead by the police in front of thousands of witnesses, many of them children. Ojeda Paullada refused to allow an investigation into the murders. This man was elected to preside over the conference.

Much of the conference was self-congratulatory, dedicated to delegates lauding the achievements of their respective governments. There were some interesting comments, though, from the Cuban delegation headed by Vilma Espin. She said Cuba was progressing without forgetting that its past was the "oppressive present" of other peoples.

Manoeuvring and Intrigue

The general atmosphere of the conference was of political manoeuvring and intrigue. Labour MP Millie Miller, heading the British delegation, blamed the Latin American and Third World delegates for wrecking the conference. Instead of discussing women's issues, she said, they constantly brought up "political" issues, like attempting to ban the Chilean delegation, denouncing Zionism, imperialism, racism and every other "ism" except sexism, she continued, which was what the conference was supposed to be about. All the British delegation did, though, was vote in line with the US, abstaining on all politically sensitive issues in a situation where they were hopelessly outnumbered.

It is true, though, that sexism was ignored. Those who not only dared to mention the unmentionable — prostitution, lesbianism, unpaid domestic labour and reproduction of the work force — but also organised packed forums around these issues, were accused by the Latin American delegates of

being manipulated by the CIA in their attempts to discredit the respectability of the conference.

At the end, a predictable 10-year plan was ratified by all but the Chinese and Vatican delegations, who objected to the clauses on birth control. Demands included equal education and job opportunities, adequate health facilities, an end to child marriages, a diet for women equal to that of men, the right of women and men to decide on their own reproduction, equal division of responsibility for housework and child-care in the family, and the re-writing of text-books to eradicate sex roles.

One Long Mother's Day?

One can only ask why it was decided to have such a 'Women's Year' which, as Australian Elizabeth Reid said, looks like "one long Mother's Day". The fact that it comes just after Population Year is

one key. The Mexican Women's Liberation Movement had no illusions:

"By conceding us a year, a politically inoffensive and innocuous character is given to our actions and needs. In the last few years, women have expressed their dissatisfaction with the place assigned to them by society and our consciousness of our oppression and exploitation has visibly increased.

"Now it is necessary for us to be incorporated into the system, so that we are assimilated to contribute to its development . . . to channel our political and physical potential towards the continuation of the capitalist system.

"The two functions carried out by all women all their lives, that of housework and reproduction, continue to be analysed in a world dominated by men, according to masculine values. The work that basically constitutes the life of all women, housework, continues

to be ignored as work."

Referring to birth control methods, "We ask ourselves why International Women's Year has once again made this an exclusively female problem. Who benefits from control of the reproduction of the work force? Can it be that in Mexico and in India women are happier having less children, whilst in Rumania and France having more?"

Referring to the slogans of the conference and of the year — Equality, Development and Peace — the document of the Movimiento de Liberacion de la Mujer concludes: "We do not want equality of exploitation with men; We reject a development that perpetuates racial and sexual economic inequality; We reject a peace which means only the stability of the existing system." □

Jenny Rathbone
Inter Press Service

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR: THREE

Mexico to participate in the International Women's Conference to celebrate International Women's Year. They were to be led by the Chief Minister of Orissa.

The Prime Minister of India also was to have gone to Mexico to address the plenary session of the conference. Some unforeseen factors, however, intervened. And now the leader of the delegation has been changed and the Prime Minister will not be going.

Most of the documentaries on India's women, as they are today, have been rejected for being sent to Mexico for screening during the conference. The documentaries on the dowry system and on the working conditions of women in the lower strata of society were found to be too starkly realistic to deserve being shown to a foreign audience. Unfortunately, truth does not flatter; so that the only documentaries which the delegation has selected are those on Mrs Gandhi.

Marriage bond

Yet, in half a dozen districts of Orissa, so acute is the distress of the people, the pangs of hunger so compelling that grieving mothers and grand-mothers, having sold all their earthly belongings, are now taking their little girls to the market to sell them.

Girls between 10 and 15 years of age are for sale; the small ones fetch 15 or 20 rupees, a little more or a little less than three kilos of brassware which is selling cheap at six rupees a kilo; for a young woman, however, the demand is greater; for an article of immediate pleasure buyers are ready to pay well.

In this International Women's Year we are talking of equal rights, of equal pay for equal work; we pretend to be perturbed if our husbands do not share with us the kitchen chores; some of us have been toying with the

idea of dropping Miss or Mrs and substituting Ms before our names. All these, no doubt, are worthy objectives.

But in this vast land of ours what is the proportion of such women demanding equal status to those humble people living below the poverty line whose only demand is a handful of grain and who have to sell their daughters to remain alive?

It appears that in Uttar Pradesh, the sale of young women is not an uncommon phenomenon. A senior district officer told a journalist touring the district of Banda, "Buying a Harijan¹ girl to 'marry' is nothing new among the Thakurs and Brahmins of Bundelkhand; more often than not, the helpless parents are forced to sign the 'marriage bond'. Thus at least 1,500 girls are sold to these landlords every year."

Of course, the question of marriage does not arise because the girls are untouchables. No doubt, after the landlord has had his fill, the girls are tossed away like sucked lemons. Apart from such buys, the Deputy Inspector General² remarked that in the preceding nine months, 145 girls had been abducted in the district of Banda. Acute poverty has dragged women out of the safety of their homes to labour camps and these are the hunting grounds of rich landlords and contractors. An old labourer sobbed, "Our daughters are taken away in front of our eyes."

Officials are helpless; 'political' reasons tie down their hands. A former Home Minister of the State corroborated this sordid tale. The number of girls abducted from the various labour camps³ in the district is so high that only a competent authority can assess it after a thorough investigation.

Apart from these tragic and oppressive conditions of life, which a woman has to put up with in certain parts of rural India, the conditions of life of

the Harijan women in this citadel of culture will make any discussion of women's status sound impertinent.

In certain areas of Delhi, there still exist latrines which have to be cleaned manually. In this free India whose goal is casteless and classless society, this task of cleaning latrines has been assigned unquestioningly and exclusively to the Harijan community.

While, after years of struggle men have been given wheelbarrows; women still carry on their heads these loathsome buckets. The elite society is looking on unruffled; for to them these are not the women of India whose rights they are fighting to secure.

Sitting pretty

After 28 years of independence, if this is the life picture of Harijan women, if they have to live in constant fear of being abducted, if they can be bought to satisfy the carnal demands of the affluent, if parents, even under the shadow of death, can differentiate between a son and a daughter, selling the daughter while holding on to the son till their last breath, then, perhaps, it would be more useful and honest to do first things first.

That is, concentrating all efforts on restoring to woman the human dignity she has lost and then talk about the less fundamental of women's problems.

What good would it do to these women to give them the right of equal inheritance, since most of them have nothing to inherit but poverty?

Or to talk to them of equal pay for equal work since everybody knows that in the present socio-economic structure of society, laws for this purpose cannot be enforced while labour is cheap and work scarce? And who is there to enforce these laws and bring the transgressor to book?

It is not that the country is lacking in organisations for this purpose. They are all there — the All-India Women's Conference, the Central Social Board, the National Conference of Women, the Ministry of Social Welfare, the All-India Congress Women's Association, not to mention the various Mahila Kalyan Samitis⁴. But to the shame of the entire nation they have all sat quietly, not once visiting the areas where women are being bought and sold, that too, in International Women's Year!

The professed object of all these bodies, one hears through all the mass media, is to improve▷

Women in Vietnam: a refugee harvests rice in the paddy fields of the Mekong Delta

VIEWS 2

"The less we participate in these world conferences the better it will be for the country", writes Indian journalist Amiyo Rao. Her article 'First Things First' appeared in the Hindustan Times on June 22, four days before Indira Gandhi proclaimed a state of emergency in the country. By mid-August 100,000 people had been arrested without charge. All newspapers are now strictly censored. Such an article can no longer be published.

On June 12, India was to have sent her representatives to

During July Indian women in London demonstrated against Indira Gandhi's repressive measures

the conditions of women in India. But one has to ruefully admit that their sole objective — though not professed, and to attain which every effort seems to be concentrated — is to get their members invited to these world conferences and thus gain what they believe is 'prestige'.

The conference over, replete with a sense of fulfilment, they return home after relaxing in a few neighbouring countries and acquiring a few articles not available in this part of the world.

The pitiful achievements of the Conference on Population Control are still fresh in one's memory. So the less we participate in these world conferences the better it will be for the country, if for no other reason than to avoid the huge waste of foreign exchange.

This could be better utilised in several ways. In India malnutrition among women of the age-group 15-45 (about 120 million) might contribute to millions of babies going blind. Of the women, illiterates form 81.56 per cent and exceed 92 per cent in States like Bihar and Rajasthan.

It is in this situation only logical, though less glamorous, to attend to the real and urgent

problems facing Indian womanhood, than making speeches and showing irrelevant documentaries in foreign countries. □

NOTES

1. Harijan: Untouchable
2. Deputy Inspector General: equivalent in rank to a Deputy Commissioner of Police
3. Labour camps: for unemployed people. They are fed in return for work
4. Mahila Kalyan Samiti: Women's Welfare Organisation

3

"While organized for International Women's Year, the conferences are not planned for feminists and do not claim to be feminist events," says a statement entitled US Feminists and International Women's Year.

Spare Rib is reprinting extracts from this statement, prepared in Washington DC by Charlotte Bunch and Frances Doughty of Quest: A Feminist Quarterly before the Mexico

Conference and Tribune were held.

This is the Reality
Most countries, except for the US, Canada and Mexico, will be represented by relatively few women either sent by their governments or who can afford the high cost of coming. We have heard that even West European feminists cannot afford to come in large numbers. Therefore, the presence of large numbers of women from the US presents serious problems.

No matter whether the individual is conservative or radical, she will be part of an overwhelming US presence and domination of the conference which will be resented by many. This is the reality of American cultural and economic imperialism.

Also, since most women from the Tribune will not attend the government's conference, we will not be speaking directly to governmental representatives. Rather we will be talking with individuals who may or may not be tied to policy-making in their countries. There will be some communication of what goes on at the Tribune to the official government's conference, but no one should go assuming

that they will be directly confronting those governments.

Therefore, we think that US feminists should consider seriously whether to go to Mexico at all and what our presence there means. People considering taking actions in Mexico should remember that it is not primarily us, US women, but the Mexican feminists who will suffer any repercussions of what we do there.

English language domination will be an issue at the conference; priority should go to sending women who speak other languages. In setting up our workshops, we should provide translation and remember that we are at an advantage verbally, if all conversations are conducted in English.

Feminists should go to listen as much as to show the world what our idea of feminism is. We should take the time and opportunity to listen closely to what women of other countries tell us about their lives — both their oppressions and their strengths. Those strengths are often ones that have been socialized out of most white, middle class women and we, therefore, often fail to recognise them in others. □



"And if Tim Curry doesn't win an Academy Award for his performance as Frank, and the Time-Warp isn't the next dance craze I'll hang up my suspender belt. Miss it if you dare."

Mick Brown - SOUNDS

Twentieth Century-Fox presents
A MICHAEL WHITE-LOU ADLER PRODUCTION

THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW AA

THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW AA

TIM CURRY SUSAN SARANDON BARRY BOSTWICK

Original musical play music & lyrics by RICHARD O'BRIEN Screenplay by JIM SHARMAN & RICHARD O'BRIEN

Executive Producer LOU ADLER Produced by MICHAEL WHITE Directed by JIM SHARMAN

EASTMAN COLOUR Released by FOR RANK Distributors

DOLBY SYSTEM
Noise Reduction - High Fidelity

RIALTO COVENTRY ST
437 3488
BETWEEN PICCADILLY CIRCUS AND LEICESTER SQUARE

NOW!

Info..Odds & Sods..Advice

Spanish Group

My friend and I have never actually belonged to a Women's Liberation group, although we've tried to do our bit anyway. This year however we are going back to Spain where we want to work politically. We would also like to try to set up a Women's Liberation group.

Do you happen to know if there is an existing women's movement already there? And could you possibly give us any suggestions on setting up a group.

Love and sisterhood,
Catherine Dolan
London E7

* There are groups of women involved in the movement in Spain, but due to the political situation there I am afraid I am unable to give you any contact addresses, because of the likelihood of incrimination.

The Women's Liberation Workshop publishes a couple of short documents, one on consciousness raising and the other a brief history of the workshop, which may be of use to you in starting a small group. (Their address is 38 Earlham Street, London WC2.) There is also a comprehensive article on the small group process by the old Tufnell Park group in *The Body Politic: Women's Liberation in Britain 1969-72*. You can obtain this from Stage One, Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8SD, price 60p.

Moving to Essex

I and a woman friend are moving to Essex (Colchester area?). I am starting at the University and Sue is starting at the Tech. We have various seemingly insoluble problems: 1) we know of no one in Essex who is in WLM or Men Against Sexism; 2) we have nowhere to live; 3) we want an unfurnished place as we have a lot of furniture; 4) we can't live on campus because of the moral crap - we aren't legally married; 5) our only income will be my grant and Sue's SS or part-time job; 6) we will probably have a co-habitation battle as well; 7) Sue will probably have to travel to the Tech in Braintree as Colchester Tech is full up.

Could you therefore give us some addresses of women's and/or men's groups in the Colchester area. Maybe they might know where we could rent a small place or share with other people

who are perhaps involved in the movement. All we really need is some form of supportive community that will open up some doors for our basic survival.

Yours in solidarity,
Sue (Rochdale Women's group)
Steve (Oldham Men's group)
33 Links View
Rochdale
Lancs

* Sure, we can give you the addresses of the women's groups anyway in Colchester. Hopefully people living in or near Colchester, or at the University, will contact you when they see this letter and if they think they can help.

Colchester WL, c/o 39 Charles St, Colchester, Essex.

Essex University WL, c/o Ruth Corke, Students' Pigeon Holes, University of Essex, Colchester, Essex.



Gay Group

Two of us have just moved to the Kirkby, Sutton, Mansfield area and are very keen to get together a social group for any gay (or bi-sexual) women who would like to meet others, have any problems, or would simply like support.

Please contact:
Hilary Stafford and Pat McLernon, Nottingham and Derby Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE)
PO Box 82
Nottingham NG1 1ET



Rape Group

I recently attended a meeting of the women's group currently engaged in setting up a Rape Crisis Centre in London c/o 66 York Way. I am interested in organising a similar Centre in Cambridge area. I wondered whether you might be able to give me the names and addresses of any other women's groups in Britain who are involved in the same sort of activity - particularly those groups that are located in towns the size of Cambridge and who are interested in serving areas the size of Cambridgeshire.

I would like to know the names and addresses of any other women or groups of women in Cambridge who might

be interested in joining me to help organise such a Centre.
Yours in sisterhood,
(Ms) Doreen Jones
45 Ellisley Avenue
Cambridge

* The only active Rape Crisis Centre I know of is the one in Derby. The address is c/o Hilary Davison, 51 Wallbrook Road, Derby. The address of Cambridge Women's Liberation is 48 Eden Street, Cambridge (Tel: 63886).

Conception or Adoption?

Wonder if you could advise me upon the following matters:

Due to an illegal abortion followed by salpingitis twelve years ago I have been told by three doctors (one was a homeopath) that I may not be able to conceive. I am now married and would like a child - what are the chances of conceiving after salpingitis?

Also if I can't conceive we'd like to adopt a child, but everybody tells me that there aren't any available! Is this so? And



who would I get in touch with about it? We are not too fussy about having it from birth, etc., i.e. we would take one aged one to three years. We are both 'Protestants' but don't go to church or anything. Would we have to be religious to adopt a child? We are not fussy about its colour either.
Hoping to hear from you,
Biddy de Muro
Leicester

* It is by no means necessarily the case that salpingitis (acute inflammation of the fallopian tubes) causes infertility. Only in cases where both fallopian tubes are blocked as a result of the infection is conception unlikely to occur. There are several tests that can be done to find out whether there is a blockage in the fallopian tubes, the most common involving the injection of iodised oil into the uterus, after which X-rays are taken. The oil outlines the uterus and tubes and in the event of one or both tubes being blocked, the X-ray will show where this has occurred. Before assuming that you can't conceive it would be wise to check it all out with a reliable gynaecologist, and have these tests performed if necessary. Incidentally I conceived just six months after having salpingitis.

However if you do discover after all that you cannot conceive you will want to adopt. There is some truth in what your friends say about this being difficult, but this applies particularly in the case of white Anglo-Saxon newly born children. If you don't mind about its colour or age, the process is much simpler. There are adoption societies you can go to, but many local authorities run adoption schemes too, and your best bet would probably be these channels.

Women's Rights: A Practical Guide by Coote and Gill, published by Penguin, gives some useful preliminary details, and it's probably worth buying. It points out that you have to be carefully vetted when adopting through an agency, that some adoption societies require the adoptive parents to be a certain religion, whereas local authorities don't make these stipulations, and that there are long waiting lists and you should be prepared to wait two or more years before having a child.

I hope this is helpful. Let us know how you get on.

Info..Odds & Sods..Advice

Elizabeth Wilson

CLOTHES

Most women's magazines are little more than glorified advertising copy for dress and make-up manufacturers, and assume that what women want to do — above all else — is to look 'beautiful', sexy and young. What counts as beauty is quite narrowly defined, and so millions of women who might otherwise all look different (which you would think would be more interesting) spend much time copying the *Vogue* or *Woman's Own* or *Nineteen* copies of Twiggy, Rita Hayworth or Biba.

Women's liberation has tried to escape from these stereotypes, and yet clothes do express more than narcissism or conformity. There is an element of fantasy and originality in the design of some clothes, and women can express a feeling for beauty in putting together colours, patterns and shapes that they find aesthetically pleasing. Clothes, like furniture, interior decoration and graphic design reflect both the economic realities and the 'spirit' of the age from which they spring. In fact this is a cliché of historians of fashion who have contrasted (for example) the freedom of the Regency age of licence (when girls cropped their hair and wore see-through dresses) with the stuffiness of the mid-Victorian period with its stifling crinolines, shawls and submissive hairstyles. Clothes do at least say something about the society we live in and about our fantasies of ourselves.

Clothes have an economic function; they have a social function; they have a sexual function; they have an ideological function, that is, they express ideas about society and how society wants women (and men) to be. They are also, of course, necessary for physical survival, i.e. as a protection against heat and cold, but clothing in almost all societies has gone far beyond this, its only vital function.

In Western Europe spending on clothes since the Second World War has had to do with higher wages and full employment so that women and the young have had more spending power. Advertising and magazines have exploited this, by emphasising rapid changes in fashion. Changing fashions are not something that happens in every society, for instance the Cretans and the Greeks wore the same or similar clothes for thousands of years. Our society, and particularly in this century, has gone further than all others in a constantly speeded up rate of fashion change so that women are encouraged towards repeated dissatisfaction with the clothes they have and a desire for something new and different. Mass production has made it possible to produce enormous quantities of relatively cheap clothes. Most women have more clothes than they need, and the compulsion to buy them is an artificially fostered one, but one that is profitable to the manufacturers, to the textile industry and the retail trade.



But it would be too simple to dismiss fashion as part of the conspiracy of capitalism. Clothes have also always had a social meaning. In some rigidly divided societies only certain castes or families were allowed by law to wear particular kinds of clothes. Clothes, such as the priest's robes and the scholar's gown, also signalled people's vocations and callings. We have no actual laws about clothes, but there are unwritten rules about some forms of dress; the top hat and 'morning dress' worn to Ascot, for instance, are visible signs of social rank, or at least wealth. (But it is also true that in an age of mass production, some fashions have been based on a reaction against 'affluence' when even working-class 'poor' people can buy imitations of high-fashion clothes. Blue jeans are one such fashion — the film star or millionaire's wife in faded jeans, bare feet, a workman's vest, is simply trying to reach a new level of sophistication, one that rejects the vulgarity of display and chooses instead the simplicity of pretended poverty.)

But in order to encourage women to buy more clothes it seemed necessary to play on their anxieties about their attractiveness to men and competitiveness with other women. Clothes and make-up have therefore played an important part in accentuating and encouraging particular ways it is thought

LAURENCE SPARHAM



MITZI GAYNOR

LAURENCE SPARHAM

ADVERTISEMENT



MITZI GAYNOR

women should look. There is a rather strange conflict here. With every step forward there are new problems. As women became more emancipated, clothes came to be seen as emphasising sexual attractiveness very directly. The Marilyn Monroe image of the Fifties, the tight sweaters, pulled in waist and breasts uplifted by padded brassieres is one example. This became a sexual stereotype. Another, less crude, which was influential both before the war and in the Fifties, was the gipsy style originated by Augustus John's wife, Dorelia. Seen around Chelsea in the Thirties, the dirndl skirts, flat ballerina slippers, dangling earrings and straggling long hair became a student cliché of the Fifties. But it is never possible rigidly to separate off sexual from social and social from economic statements; and this 'arty' student style not only emphasised a particular kind of sex appeal but also announced to the world that its wearer was a student, artist or some other kind of bohemian rebel. For ever since the Romantic period, if not before, there have always been alternative styles of dress for those who rejected the dominant values of their society.



ADVERTISEMENT

But the contradictory nature of society's attitude towards women as expressed in these stereotypes can be seen in the way in which fashion and personal attractiveness are discussed in women's magazines. They show women a stereotype of beauty; yet fashion and beauty are discussed in terms of each woman accentuating her individuality. This belief in individual differences is very highly developed in our society. Individualism accentuates the differences rather than the similarities between one person and the next. In unimportant ways women go to great lengths to emphasise minute differences, yet end up looking alike. This hinders us from feeling brought together by the similarity of our situation.

The sexual stereotype of the Sixties was rather different. For a time women wore less and less and looked younger and younger. Mini-skirts, see-through blouses and trousers tight at the crotch all purveyed an image of liberated woman, the swinging girl on the Pill. This was really sexual exploitation rather than liberation. The sign of half-naked girls with undone hair tumbling down their backs alongside fully clad men hardly suggested the meeting of two equals.

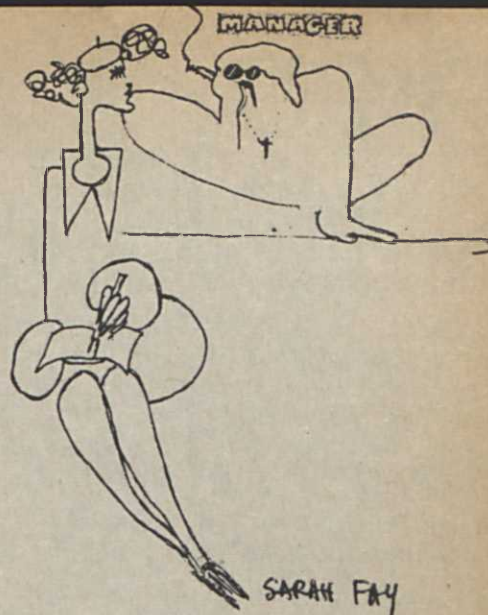
The Counter-culture, the Underground and the Women's Movement brought a complete reaction against all that, and the renewal of 'alternative' fashion styles. Women in cultural revolt, along with their men, expressed a different philosophy — of do-it-yourself crafts (crochet, embroidery), or re-cycling, ecology-consciousness (jumble-sale clothes,



army surplus), or holy poverty and non-consumerist creativity, or oriental and mystical influences (kaftans and patchouli scent), and the love of exotic cultures generally (long peasant skirts, Afro shirts, ponchos). There was affectation perhaps in the discovery of jumble-sale clothes.

After all, lots of women have always had to wear their clothes until they wore out. I am sure that unsupported mothers and the wives of the unemployed discovered jumble sales long before middle-class hippies made them fashionable, because at the outbreak of the last war, one reason for the shortage of shoes among working class people and especially evacuee children was that for once the rich had to wear their shoes out instead of passing them on.*

But Hippie-style clothes did at any rate express ideas very directly, even if the ideas themselves were often muddled and contradictory.



Because the Women's Movement started to happen at this time — around 1970 — and sprang partly from the same roots, it partly adopted these styles. This is less noticeable than it used to be, but there is still a certain uniformity about the way many feminists dress — and the untidiness, the wild curls or skinhead cuts, the make-uplessness, the dungarees, the bover boots and the jumble-stall shawls must seem rather alarming to other women at times, or else rather elitist. After all, many women still depend on a traditionally glamorous appearance in order to obtain work — the receptionist, secretary or sales girl would not dare appear at work like that. Her careful make-up, layered hair, smooth legs and lacquered nails are necessary qualifications for her job. It may not seem that way, but actually she wears a uniform, the uniform of femininity.

Perhaps women in the Women's Movement simply express in a sharpened form all the contradictions of the position of women. To cast off bras, for instance, was not just a symbol but a physical liberation for some women, yet at the same time the visible nipple may suggest sexual availability rather than social freedom. Dykey, butch clothes too express not just the rejection of femininity, but a need to take up an aggressive pose that not all women would accept. At the same time, there is inconsistency, and some fashions and fads are taken up wholesale by the Women's Movement. It was noticeable last winter that many women bought calf length skirts and voluminous smocks and gave up trousers — and the fashion columns informed them this was fashionable (although I think that for women trousers are ultimately the most functional and revolutionary solution to the problem of clothes).

In many ways the mass-media image of Women's Liberation as being 'against femininity' (as one woman I was talking to in a train recently expressed it) is untrue. In theory, of course, we are, in the sense that 'being feminine' means adopting all sorts of affectations, adopting a way of relating to other people that is essentially manipulative (feminine wiles) and clothes that — more so in the past than today — are often really uncomfortable or unhealthy and impede freedom of movement (e.g. stiletto heels and platform soles). But in practice?

How do we relate to society's changed attitude to clothes today? Much has been ►

FREE GIFT

Would you like to receive *Spare Rib* every month through the post?

If you fill in the form below, you can receive a subscription to *Spare Rib*

★★★★ **plus**

A special pack of 10 *Spare Rib* cards (illustrated below).

Each card is decorated with the women's liberation symbol and includes a useful list of addresses of women's centres around the country.

Each card has its own envelope and a blank space inside for your message.



Offer available for one month only — a pack usually sells for 50 pence. Closing date is September 30, 1975.

Complete this form and send it to: Linda Phillips, 114 George Street, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2EJ.

Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Spare Ribs Limited. I enclose cheque/postal order for £4.44 for 12 issues of *Spare Rib* ☐

I enclose a self-addressed envelope (not smaller than 6½" x 4½") and 8p stamp for a free pack of *Spare Rib* cards ☐

Name

Address

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

Spare Ribs Ltd is a non-profit making organisation.



made of supposed changes in the fashion scene — the end of the Paris ascendancy, the fragmentation of fashion — "we can all wear what we like now, it's so much more creative"; or alternatively — "everyone wears a dreary uniform these days, just t-shirts and jeans, that's all you ever see". There is some truth in both these statements. Times do change, and though several fashions always did co-exist side by side, the choice is greater today.

Does it matter that we still like our skirts long and wondrous woollies and Forties print dresses? I think it would in fact be wrong to suggest that there is some correct attitude towards clothes that all women ought to adopt by an effort of will. As society changes, the style that is urged on women and the kinds of clothes women are able to wear change too. As women become more active and fulfilled and politically conscious they don't make a decision to think less about clothes; it just occurs and that's good.

Yet there remains an ambivalence. It has been said that in a society like ours, obsessed with things and possessions and the getting of more possessions, *Style* is the most longed for possession of all. We were all brought up with the idea of *Style* as mask, as pose, as image, and of *Image* as something to cultivate. (*Image* was a very fashionable word in the permissive Sixties.) There is an undoubted tension between self-expression



THE FAIREST OF THEM ALL

By Caroline Baker/Photographs by Jonathan Sieff
Moments of narcissism need the most beautiful clothes in the world. Unfortunately, such moments tend to be costly ones because the fabrics involved are frail and delicate, expensive to purchase and difficult to make up. Add to this the designer's name and fame and the number of garments made, and you have the final price: mostly high, sometimes downright extravagant. Still, for oneself, no price is too high, and nothing but the best is best. Photo by Catherine de Medici. Make-up and nails by John Stoddart on page 66.

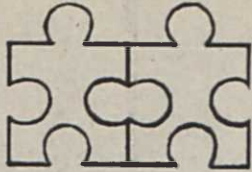
(individualism) and the playing down of the display of personality in the co-operative political work of a group. This probably confuses many women (myself included). But then women in the Women's Movement are particularly subject to conflicts of feeling. Some women love men and hate them too. Some want both multiple orgasms and celibacy. We all want to go overboard on our gut feelings and we want to stand back and understand our situation. Not surprising if this is reflected or repeated in a style of dress. It is like being in love. We know that romantic love is a form of sexual repression, and that it involves a distortion of the love-object. Yet at times that is just what we want, and we feel pained when we read of societies, socialist or not, where bourgeois romantic love is unknown and regarded as crazy.

So, in me at least there survives a secret cultivator of the self, an aesthete who really did think that *Style* was the most desirable thing in the world. In serious moments I feel I should show her the door, give her the kiss-off, boot her out. Usually I just hope she'll slip away without my noticing. Either way, I know I'll miss her when she goes. It's the love-hate relationship many women have with themselves and which is reflected so carefully in their clothes. But not until it's less complicated learning to become a woman will it be possible to have a simpler attitude towards clothes. □

*R M Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (1950)

GAYWAY

Your own special dating service



Let us fit you together with your compatible gay friend. That's what we're here for, and that's why there's Gayway.

We're a unique dating service which caters solely for people who happen to be gay, in the most personal way we can: no names on circulatory lists; nothing so impersonal as that. No, with Gayway, you're not just a name, you're a person: and we'll tell you how we do it.

When you make your partnership with us (£7 annual membership) and send us one booth photo and a confidential letter all about yourself, and indications of the sort of gay woman that you'd like to meet, you get a personal letter back from us. And that way we're not only getting to know each other, but at the same time we're finding you your special gay friend.

You can trust us. You can trust Gayway to be honest with you, if you're honest with us. And we'll do our very best to find the sort of gay woman you have always been looking for.

So, to make your partnership with us, send £7 membership crossed with Gayway, . . . or send a first class stamp the first class way for first class details: it's not much effort coz we'll do the rest for you.

GAYWAY

77 Fortis Green Road, London N10
(NO CALLERS)



FREE PREGNANCY TESTS

Also Advice on Abortion,
Full Fertility Control, and
Vasectomy. British Pregnancy
Advisory Service is a
non-profit making registered
charitable trust. Tel:

Birmingham (021) 643 1461

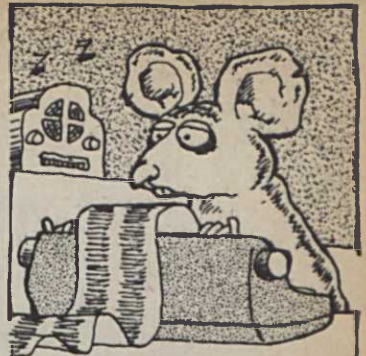
Brighton (0273) 509726

Leeds (0532) 443861

Liverpool (051) 227 3721

Manchester (061) 236 7777

BPAS



IBM Typesetting by
Caroline MacKechnie/Shirley Divers
105 Golborne Road, London W10
Telephone 01-969 5083
Good rates for feminist/alternative
books, mags, pamphlets, etc.
Illustration and paste-up too.

COMPENDIUM
240 Camden High Street
London NW1
(01) 485 8944

Large selection of
books on women and
sexual politics

Mail Order Service:
Send for free list

BORED?

We've someone special
waiting for you right now
Matchmaker puts you in touch
with unlimited computer selected
contacts of the opposite sex. Membership
of our Leisure and Travel Club. Our Computer
dating service matches all ages from 17-70
according to your choice for lasting
friendships. Newsletter, Parties, Weekend
Events and lots more. For details send two 7p
stamps to - Dept SRB@
Matchmaker, 25 Kings Road, Chelsea,
London SW3 4RP
or ring 01-730 5142 (24 hours)

Matchmaker
puts you in touch



If you are an engineering staff worker

JOIN TASS

The staff section of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers

If you oppose sex discrimination in jobs, in pay, in opportunity

JOIN TASS

Don't let the employers organise you out of equal pay
and equal opportunities. Legislation will not be enough.

YOU NEED ORGANISATION NEGOTIATION

As well as legislation.

Write for application, or organise a meeting.

Contact: Judith Hunt, National Womens Officer, Amalgamated Union of
Engineering Workers, Technical Administrative and Supervisory Section,
Onslow Hall, Little Green, Richmond, Surrey.



Ayse, Maria and Zeynep live in the Cypriot community and attend a mixed comprehensive school in London. They describe how the ideas and possibilities created by their school life bring them into direct and painful conflict with the rigid values of their patriarchal families at home.

CYPRriot STORIES

Many Cypriot girls are ignorant about pregnancy, birth control and childbirth, or have obtained from one source or another, false or inadequate information about such vital matters. So the typical Cypriot man is quite easily able to become almost totally dominant over them. Such ignorance – which is certainly not innate – is deliberately forced on the girls from the moment they are born. Occasionally they will object, but they rarely protest strongly about the various customs which are followed – although they have no real or significant foundation. Thus their ignorance and naivety offer much ego-boosting and pleasure for the men, whose conventional aim is to get all the young pure virgins before they have time to become aware of themselves as women capable of achieving many tasks other than the simple, yet tiresome and monotonous chores around the house. In addition, due to inadequate information about contraception, these girls soon have several children to tie them even more to the home.

At school, sex education till the sixth year was inadequate and confusing. What a relief it was to stumble on the subject in the Child Development class and receive some real teaching. It was accidental that we came across the subject as it was not on the syllabus, but it is very difficult to talk about childbirth, pregnancy, love and marriage without including the bit inbetween – contraception and conception, and sex. Therefore sex cropped up time and time again in our lessons, and instead of our teachers shying away from the subject or talking round it they gave us frank and

straightforward information which could be of relevance to our lives.

Need I say we were all grateful for this information and advice. However there was one problem. A large majority of our class were Cypriots. At home we were taught *against* sex, not *about* it, so how much should the teachers say? They did not want to teach us against our parents' doctrines yet they wanted to give us all the necessary advice on the subject so that we would not end up with an unwanted pregnancy on our hands. The only option open to them was to brief us on the subject and let us decide for ourselves what to do about it. Those who want to have sex will have it whether they have been taught about it or not – it is not as if 'sex teaching' introduces girls to the subject, we all know it exists. However, Cypriot parents do not see it in the same light. They think that the way to keep a girl chaste is to keep her ignorant. Their only answer to keeping a girl a virgin till marriage is to keep her completely away from the opposite sex. Sending the girls to girls' schools and keeping them in at night is common practice in many Cypriot homes.

They then meet an acceptable Cypriot husband on outings with the family, and the wedding is held as soon as the parents can possibly manage it – from 15 years onwards. This is so that the girl is completely ignorant on her wedding night and her husband – who has been encouraged from youth to go out and get experience – is naturally 'superior' in bed. Seen from that angle it is not surprising that many Cypriot women see sex more as a duty than as a pleasure to be enjoyed by both partners. Indeed they are conditioned to believe that since they are the 'breeding' sex their life is not to be enjoyed and that strain and unhappiness are inevitable. Alternatively, the man, being born male, is automatically thought to be here simply to enjoy himself, and since he cannot get pregnant why shouldn't he lay girls?

I feel there is a real need for sex education for Cypriot girls so that they are made to realise that life is to be enjoyed and it can be, if contraception is used to prevent children coming into a marriage until the woman is ready to deal with them and to part with her freedom. But parents would surely not agree to their daughters having knowledge on the subject as they know it will lead to the collapse of the old doctrines they are hanging on to so desperately. This is the situation sex education has produced in many of us Cypriot girls and most of us are determined not to fall into the trap, yet it is difficult to make a definite decision to go against parents' doctrines. This is the dilemma of one of my friends, who writes below...

PHOTOS BY CAROLINE MAIDLOW



FORCED DECEPTION

My fella and I first met as he was walking by with a few blokes. He had rushed in immediately and asked me out. My first reaction was that I would like to, but I could not. As we chatted it was inevitable that he would want to know the reason why. We already liked each other a great deal after such a short period, and my reluctance to disclose some facts aroused his curiosity. I explained that it was virtually impossible for me to go out in the evening and that the occasional times I did go out were with the whole family, to visit relatives at their homes where they would sit and chat about the latest scandals or watch television — similar to the environment, activities and uninspiring atmosphere of home. Sometimes I would go down to the coast with the family and many of our relatives. The intention? To settle down somewhere and pollute the fresh grass and the clean air with the grey fumes from the utensil used for cooking meat and having a kebab picnic. Every activity revolves around relatives and Cypriots. Even holidays are frequently spent among relatives of one sort or another. Financially this is fine, for there is no need to exert yourself for hotel bills and so on, but the enjoyment is drastically reduced because you are with familiar faces all the time.

Eventually I did explain my situation to this bloke. Strangely enough it did not bother him and for 18 months or so it did not bother me either. We got together and during that time, when he continually reassured me that our love could keep us together, I felt as if nothing could touch me — not even the conventional customs I was obliged to follow once away from him and from school. We did not actually start going out with each other until about six months after we met, when I realised that I would be able to get out of school early once a week and could see him then. Or if I got out of school early due to a meeting perhaps then I would be with him. It was inevitable that at times I would resort to truancy in

order for us to be together.

The great and eternal dilemmas are that he lives a life so very free in contrast to my restricted lifestyle. He has not got a job and therefore has 24 hours to himself when he can do anything that springs to mind, whereas I have to be home by 5.30 at the latest, which is terribly inconvenient and frustrating — having to leave after such a brief time together. It is an awful lot worse for him, though, because I go and fill a few hours out of the 24 that he has to kill and leave him lonelier than before. (I did in fact suggest that he go with other girls if he wanted to but he did not want to and never did.)

It's rare for me to go out in the night-time and I have to be at school in the day-time, which I cannot possibly afford to miss, or else I would be doing extra school work as well as homework at night. And it is vital that I stay on at school in order to satisfy my mind, to learn all the things I still want to gain knowledge about and equally to keep the little freedom I have now.

It has always been a tremendous and overpowering struggle to carry on this relationship. There are things that we cannot possibly do, such as walk down a main road — we have to walk down the back streets in case anyone sees us. We also have to keep a constant lookout as we walk down any road in case some Cypriot who happened to know me comes along. One in particular is an old Cypriot man who has not much to do except hobble backwards and forwards all day long, and settle down for long periods in the cafe where we want to have something to eat. No matter how much we feel like holding hands or putting our arms round each other, we have to hold ourselves back. Nor can we venture to embrace or kiss when we want to, unless we are at his home and secure. What's more, we have to walk about four or five feet apart, which is absolutely ridiculous!

In addition, by genuine coincidence, my father happened to get a good job on a building site which conveniently surrounds the house my fella is squatting in. And if that does not give sufficient discouragement, I cannot think what does! Nevertheless, we did not allow any of this to interfere with our relationship.

There is another vital point I must stress and it is that all Cypriot girls *must* remain untouched pure virgins, which is obviously difficult living in such a permissive society here in England. Although I have gained much-appreciated knowledge about contraception, sex, pregnancy, childbirth and abortion, I still won't sleep with this man I love so much. The conditioning process I have undergone for 17 years is effective in some way. Obviously we have frequently come to a point where I shrink back and refrain, wanting to go on and yet with something telling me I dare not. It's a great emotional wrecking process having to hold yourself back and not lose your virginity. Fortunately he does understand, but understanding is not really enough. Quite recently we were in conflict over this vital aspect of our relationship for the first time. Due to the fact that he is a hippie and does mix with hippie girls and has slept with many of them it is all the more difficult for him to have to settle for an incomplete relationship.

The pressures were increasing all the time and the final straw came when he wanted me to go to a concert with him in the daytime. He was really happy because he thought that we could go — after all, it was in the daytime. He got both angry and upset when I said that I could not get out on the Saturday in order to go... it was at this stage of our time together that I felt that perhaps we had best split up. I held back every urge to go and be with him for about three weeks. During those weeks, which were in the middle of exams, I realised that I would not be able to go by the Cypriot way after having such a relationship with this bloke whom I love, into a marriage where I would have to start loving a Cypriot man and his various habits after getting married to him.

I have now reached a decision that there is no point in letting the Cypriot system mess up my life and as soon as I am guaranteed a place in a college or university, where I can break away from home happily and be able to return if I ever want to, then I definitely will use some form of contraception and once away from home the relationships I have will be complete. ►



LIVING WITH A DIFFERENCE

I was brought up to think the one aim in life is to grow up and get married. Nothing like most of you, probably, when you can grow up and fall in love and marry. You see, my marriage will be arranged. They will introduce me to a man and if I like him, and him me, we will probably get engaged and within months be married.

The first time a man was introduced to me was when I was 14 — I was at a party when a mother and her son approached us. But my mum turned them away saying I was too young.

At a few other weddings mums would come up to my mum and say "I have got a lovely son and what a nice match he would be for your daughter." This made me feel a bit sick knowing that all these mothers wanted me to marry their sons. But what got me extra mad was that they asked my mum — it wasn't *her* that they were going to marry their sons to, it was *me* (not that I wanted to marry them, but still they might ask *me*).

This carried on for a few years until I was 16 when one of my mum's cousins came to visit and asked my mum if he could speak to her in private. Well, I knew what it was going to be about when I heard that he wanted to speak to her alone. When my mum returned and told me he was going to bring a certain family to visit us I said to her that I didn't want to meet one of their stupid boys and I didn't want to get married, I told her I just couldn't fall in love like that and I didn't want to end up like her.

For the first time ever my mum listened to me and said "I understand what you mean and don't worry. I won't let you get married."

Two weeks later a knock came at the door. My sister answered it and took whoever it was into the front room to my mum. Then she came running to the kitchen and said, "They're here." I said, "Who's here?" and she said, "You know, that family — that boy mum's cousin wants you to marry."

I started to laugh. Then my mum came in and said, "Quick, let's make the tea so they can hurry up and go." I asked my mum if I had to go in and she said, "Yes, just present yourself, give out the tea and just sit there."

I knew I wasn't going to enjoy myself but we made the tea and went in. I gave it out and noticed I was being watched by the mother and the family. I thought to myself, "Now I know what it's like when the cows are at the market being sold." I felt just like them. I sat down and just listened to the conversation and of course let off the occasional smile. By then I was beginning to wonder where on earth was the boy they wanted me to meet. And what a shock I get when I was told who it was — he was no boy, he must have been 26 or 27. It was terrible. My every move was being watched. So when I heard the mother say, "Well, we must be going now", what a big smile the words put on my face.



They said goodbye and left, but before they left his mother said to my mum "What a nice daughter you have." We didn't hear from them till the next week and they told us that the 'boy' wanted to marry me. "How stupid," I thought, "He doesn't even know me and he wants to marry me."

Well, they were waiting for my reply and said that I could have a few days to think it over but I said I didn't need another second, my answer was *no*. A few weeks later I heard that this man was getting married to a girl whose father had a factory. "How awful," I thought, "he doesn't even know her, he probably doesn't love her, but he wants to marry her. I suppose it's her money he wants more than her."

My next one was a rich man. My brother-in-law works for this man, and he invited me and my sister down for a meal. But he also said to my sister to make sure I looked older, and extra special. Myself, I didn't have a clue what he was up to until we arrived. My brother-in-law was sitting at a table laid for four. We sat down and my sister said, "Right. When are we going to eat?" My brother-in-law said, "Not yet, we are waiting for someone to come." Then he dashed up to go to the door — anyone would have thought the queen was coming.

Then, when I saw the man I knew what I'd really been invited down for. I felt awful, as if I was *after* him, and that was why I was there. I didn't feel hungry any more and neither did my sister. She knew I was uncomfortable so she suggested we went to wash our hands. When we were doing this I said to her, "You should have told me that was the real reason we came here." She said that she didn't know, that he probably never told me because he knew that then I wouldn't come. We went back up and they were still talking. I noticed that he kept watching me but I didn't even so much as look at his face. I said to myself, "I bet I could pick up a better man in the streets."

We had a drink, then he drove us home. He came in and my mum made him a cup of coffee — all this time I was playing with my niece. When he had finished his coffee my brother-in-law called me and told me to take his cup. I just took it and put it on the tray. A few minutes later he left. My brother-in-law asked me what I thought of him; I said I hated him. He said, "You mean you wouldn't have him? But what about all his money, his car, and his business?" I said,

"He can stuff his money etc. down his throat and if he is out to buy a wife he can look elsewhere because he isn't getting me." A few days later I heard that he wanted me, so I just said, "Hard cheese, I am not up for sale."

Now every time I hear anything about arranged marriages or one of my relatives saying some boy is very nice I just feel sick and say I don't want anyone.

Since I never had a father my uncle acted like one. When he heard that I was staying on at school for the sixth form his first question wasn't "Are you staying on for a better job and grades?" it was "Is there a boy or teacher you love, is that why you're staying on at school?" One of my real reasons was that if I left I probably would have got married. Not that I would have been forced. I just would probably have got so fed up saying no that I would have eventually taken the next man available, just to get myself out of the house.

My uncle told me to watch the boys at school and not to fall for any. But this I couldn't obey. You can't help liking a boy — you can't stop yourself just because your uncle says so. I liked this certain boy for three months. I tried my best to talk to him but every time I did I remembered my uncle, so it was hopeless. I remember once when a boy I had liked for ages tried to kiss me and I wouldn't let him — he probably thought I didn't like it but how could I explain to him about my family life and my uncle who always told me it was wrong to do a thing like this?

Now that I've left school I know I won't get another chance to go out to school dances or anything. But I've already told them that I shall be joining evening classes at my school, then at least I can go out. It isn't anywhere special but at least it's somewhere.

In the past few weeks I've liked another boy, and now that I have left school I probably won't see him any more unless I bump into him on the street. I have still not got over him.

I hope one day I find a Turkish boy and fall for him straight away. But until then I'm saying *no* to all these other pigs. □

To protect the writers of this article, all names have been changed. We would be interested to hear from readers who have similar experiences, or something to say about the conflicts described above. Send correspondence to Alison Fell at Spare Rib.

POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION

As a feminist who both writes and reviews plays, Michelene Wandor confronts the problem of how we respond to and criticise each other's work by looking at some recent productions.

It's always something of a problem to know how to be constructively critical of work (in the arts) produced by people with whom one is in basic sympathy. As we slowly put together the history of women's oppression and suppression, we are also in the process of trying to alter the course of that history. From the beginnings of the Women's Liberation Movement we have urgently demanded of ourselves to make visible what has been suppressed, to encourage each other to produce where we have not produced, and to produce with confidence where we have produced with timidity. It becomes relatively easy for us to encourage each other and to have an initial enthusiasm when we see either an individual woman's name, or the name of a women's group attached to work in an area where women have figured relatively little — play-writing and production, for example. 'It's great — it's by a woman.'

And yet I think we're all aware that this is a response which has its own contradictions. The simple fact of production isn't enough, and neither is a simple supportive attitude which assumes that anything a woman wants to do must simply be encouraged because she is a woman and women are oppressed. In cultural production women have for so long been objects and concepts in a male-dominated view of the world and in the male-dominated cultural industries, that we have to be critical as consumers, as audiences and producers. Critical response is the lifeblood of further production and development — critical response not passive encouragement.

The need to be supportive to each other as women who share the same forms of oppression, which became a tenet of the small consciousness-raising group, has had its own specific backlash. As a result of this, the initial, reaching out uncritical support has made it very difficult to be frankly critical, and when women disagree, as indeed we must and do, both individually and politically, it manifests itself in one of two ways. Either it takes the familiar form of behind the back gossip, or the sort of violent emotional outbursts and hatreds which many of us have experienced and/or been part of. It is something which I believe is much talked over informally among women, but remains virtually unwritten about. This uneasy ambivalence — trying to maintain a precarious balancing act between support and 'betrayal' of sisterhood, generated within feminist ideology — is reflected in women's liberation writing, and happens continually behind the scenes in a way which is rarely visible.

Some months ago I was criticised for taking a competitive and superior attitude in a book review I wrote for *Spare Rib* and which finally never appeared. I tried to take into account the financial problems of its publishers, its value for a general audience (all easily described) and at the same time assess it as part of the literature which has come from the women's movement. I was critical of some aspects of the book which I thought were contradictory and acted against its avowed and admirable intentions. In an effort to break down the usually anonymous division between reviewer and reviewed, I sent the review to the author who was (still is, after a struggle) a friend, and who was very angry. I had obviously failed from her point of view to make my criticism constructive. The review which finally appeared was written by someone else and was 'better' than mine in that it relegated its criticisms to isolated specific comments, and reviewed the book mainly in terms of its own stated propaganda intentions. Perhaps it was the right review in that its function was to encourage people to buy the book and decide for themselves, but the episode highlighted the continual problems of both individual reviewers and the challenges faced by the critical/encouraging stance taken by a magazine such as *Spare*

Rib. Our aim must be to see serious criticism as the highest form of encouragement.

In some respects we're beginning to move towards it, although there is a big gap between theory and practice. All forms of cultural feminist ideology (radical feminist as well as Marxist feminist) reject the notion of woman as supreme isolated artist, writing or painting from a unique subjectivity. We acknowledge the social sources of both our oppression and our inspiration and must therefore also acknowledge our social audiences and the importance of their (our) response.

Of course, many of these difficulties apply equally to attempts to evaluate work produced by people whose struggle with and through art forms has so far been primarily defined as 'socialist' — though there can't be many theatre groups left who have not in some way looked at the question of sexism as part of the class struggle. But for all artistic work which challenges the dominant ideology (in this case, anything which doesn't fit the demands of commercial West End theatre, or safe repertory), there is always the simple problem of survival, since box office alone isn't enough. Any political theatre group which has been going for any length of time, has managed to do so because of subsidy, however small, and the role of a reviewer or critic can be an invidious one.

Any play, book, film, etc. has had weeks and sometimes months or years of work put into it. A review, political or purely aesthetic, can have a disproportionately powerful effect. A 'bad' review could knock the art-worker's livelihood on the head. People can be put off from going to see a play, arts councils may decide not to subsidise it. Some groups actively try and avoid the dangers of depending solely on publicly available reviews or assessments, by the hard and rewarding slog of doing their own publicity and relying on recommendations of people who've seen and admire their work. A network of contacts such as this takes a long time to build up, and the disembodied 'review' still has an important function, both in telling people what is available and in its attempts to evaluate and assess a particular product in relation to others of the same kind, to suggest what is progressive and what is not. It is important to try and do so without setting up competitive standards which effectively suppress anything which doesn't meet the highest demands, or in a way which serves to demonstrate the superior writing skill of the reviewer as against the reviewed. Perhaps a remote ideal is to try and write a review which is part of a public dialogue taking place in many forms — written response, audience response, fellow worker response.

'Soubrettes' by Jules and Gil

'Soubrettes' was a two-woman show compiled and performed last spring by actresses Jules and Gil, who have worked extensively in fringe theatre. Like the Sadista Sisters and the Moodies (basically all-women groups), they clearly owe to the women's movement some of the impetus for the work they're doing. It is set in a dressing room and is a mixture of glimpses of verite, surreal random episodes, straight lyrical singing and stream-of-consciousness monologue. Underneath the mixture are some cloudy efforts to dramatise some of the contradictory relationships between women — support, borrowing make-up, competitiveness over men and professional ability. But without any overall development these moments become brief eruptions which are quickly buried by the next random event.

Underlying this nervous switch from style to style is perhaps a lack of confidence to plump either for a serious look at what happens

when two actresses share the same dressing room, or to undermine the conventions of female theatricality (as the Moodies did) or to enter a theatrically articulated (and rigorously logical) fantasy world as does the People Show. Dressed throughout in fishnet tights and Bunny-type costumes, Jules and Gil ended up dominated by and dependent on theatrical props — both objects (including costumes) and stylistic conventions. And this effect conflicted with their apparent intention which was to be theatrically sophisticated, cool in their observations of women, and artistes into the bargain. The main question for them next would seem to be whether they continue to produce their own material, in which case they will need to be much tougher on themselves, or whether it would be better for them to put their considerable abilities into interpreting work created by someone else.

'Objections to Sex and Violence' by Caryl Churchill

Caryl Churchill is one of our small number of performed women playwrights. She is currently resident dramatist at the Royal Court Theatre, and 'Objections to Sex and Violence' is her second play to be performed there. (The first was 'Owners' in 1972, available as a Methuen Playscript, 75p.) It is a long, ambitious play, set on an English beach. On the surface its about terrorism. The central character is a strong, independent woman in her thirties, Jule, who is out on bail after the house she lived in was raided by the police, and explosives were found. She and a man from the house, Eric, are camping up on a cliff, to get away for a while. But the apparently safe beach gets to be rather like a railway station, with a series of people passing through. There are Arthur and Madge, upright hypocritical suburbia, Whitehouse moralists, she a model of repression in her neat white cardigan, he reading porn behind his newspaper and riddled with guilt. There is Miss Forbes, a faded gentlewoman, lonely and paranoid, but generous and understanding when Arthur gets carried away and flashes at her. More significantly there is Annie and her boyfriend Phil who have come looking for Jule. Annie is Jule's sister, also in her thirties, the opposite of Jule: timid, passive, accepting of the status quo, never able to keep a job, accepting an exploitative relationship with a boss and his wife, neither able to stand up for herself nor to have confidence to object to anything in her world.

The problem with the play is that it has two centres, both of which find an uneasy repose in Jule. There is on the one hand the 'straight' politics, Jule's response through alternative violence (her justification of urban terrorism) to the forms of violence imposed on us in society: sexual repression and exploitation. All the other characters are in different ways manifestations of the violence. And on the other hand, there is the 'psychological' politics of Jule's impact on those around her, in particular on Annie. Annie and Phil arrive to persuade Jule to come back to the fold of suburban respectability, but Jule, calm and confident, not until the second Act explaining and justifying her reasons for being a terrorist, acts as a catalyst and we witness a mini-revolution in Annie's view of herself. Jule forces her and Phil to catch some glimpses of their passivity, and the relationship between the two sisters is intense and at moments violent.

Of the two centres, 'personal' and 'political', only the personal one works as a living reality within the play. If Caryl Churchill is trying to present, or represent, an argument for terrorism as a way of dealing with society's problems, then it is an insubstantial argument. It is all at second hand, by way of Jule's polemic. If the suburban neurotics are meant to be evidence of the horrors that Jule is trying to combat, then Caryl Churchill has a simplistic view of what is wrong with society. We hear only at second hand about the others in the terrorist group, and Eric, her companion, turns out to be unreliable when he decides to skip bail and abandon his mates.

Apart from Annie and Phil's passivity, the only other visible example of a political alternative is embodied in the caricature of Jule's husband Terry, who turns up in the last scene of the play. He is a 'Party' (we assume 'Communist') member and has come to ask Jule to go back and live with him for the sake of their daughter, whom he's been looking after.

At this stage in the play, it seems clear that compared to everyone else Jule is in control of her own life, and in this personal/psychological sense is some kind of model for us. And yet because the political group of which she is a part is invisible to us, (except by her account), the hasty juxtaposition of her views with Terry's uptight CP 'line' becomes a travesty of a political argument. Neither of them present a complete or a convincing case, and Terry's statement that 'violence has nothing to do with revolution'

compounds the obscurity. If it is meant as a critique of 'The British Road To Socialism' then it is inadequately put. Certainly by this time both the notions of 'violence' and 'revolution' are quite confused; the only concrete example of constructive, revolutionary violence we have seen has been in the mutual struggle between the sisters, which for Annie involves recognising feelings of hatred towards Jule and of confrontation with her own life. The revolution we have partially witnessed has been a personal/psychological one, and it doesn't square with Terry's truncated argument.

But because Caryl Churchill did choose to write about terrorism, the play ends up doing her real strengths (shown in the dialogue and the relationships between the sisters) an injustice, and also selling short the arguments implicit in the comparative positions of characters in the play — the a-political Annie and Phil, Jule's anarchism, the upright Terry and the proto-fascist Arthur and Madge.

'Fish in the Sea' by John McGrath

The production by 7:84 of a play by John McGrath is an altogether different kettle of 'Fish in the Sea'. It is set in 1972, and owes some of its inspiration to the wave of militant factory occupations in the Midlands, and especially in Liverpool. The play has its two focuses of action, one around the factory and one around the fortunes of the Maconochie family, Dad, Mum, three daughters — Mary, Fiona and Sandra — and son Derek.

The two focuses are structurally more integrated than in Caryl Churchill's play, though for purposes of comment it is necessary to separate them. The play spans a few months in the life of the Maconochie family: at the beginning the son, unemployed, the lone boy among three girls, defensively announces he's going to join the police force, to the profound disappointment of Dad, who has been a trade unionist for many years. Fiona, the youngest daughter, is still at school, Sandra gets herself engaged to Willie who gets a job in Dad's factory, and Mary, the eldest, meets Andy, a wild Scottish loon, at a dance. On the scene also is Yorry, son of a local vicar, gawky and well-educated, later to become a caricature of the middle-class intellectual well-read in theory and with a naive romantic awe for the working class. Mum spends her time either ironing or trying to mash some sense into potatoes.

Two events then take on dramatic emphasis: the first is the takeover of Maconochie's factory by an American firm and threats of closure. The second is Mary's tortuous relationship with Andy. The political and the psychic. Andy is bursting with bad dreams, hatreds, resentments and loneliness. He senses in Mary a similar mental prison and latches on to her. She responds, but always with resistance. When she won't commit herself to him completely he goes off as a mercenary for the UDA to Northern Ireland, placing bombs and killing people. When he returns she is disgusted by the way his masochism has involuntarily become unthinking sadism, and this gives her the strength to reject him completely — though not before she has told us that what she really wants to do now is have a baby on her own.

It is clear that under threat of closure, occupying the factory is the most effective form of political action the men can take. But its significance in the play goes beyond simply being the right thing to do at the time — the correct tactic. Dad is a militant working-class man, with a history and experience of struggle in the labour movement. At the time we see him he is heavily disillusioned with the labour movement (though we don't know this till halfway through the second Act). If there is a central hero in the play, then Dad is it, and his view can be taken as the leading 'message'. The only other examples of political organisation are a ridiculed version of a trade union bureaucrat, a witty but superficial put down of the Labour Party and Wedgie Benn, and Yorry as the pretentious rest of the intellectual, 'new' left.

Thus the weight of satirical criticism of all other organised politics leaves the factory occupation and workers' control as the most important political event in the play. Although it isn't explicitly stated, the effect of this structural emphasis is to elevate a political tactic into a strategy. Despite its limited success, occupying the factory is shown as being more 'useful' than anything the trade union of the Labour Party can do. Because they are criticised as a whole, the occupation becomes a replacement 'whole' strategy. And the well-observed moments of embarrassing intellectual pretension in Yorry have the additional effect of ridiculing theory as such, as well as its misuse.

Andy's psychic protest at the violence done him by society ('the population', as he puts it) offers a parallel to the occupation as a

Objections to Sex and Violence by Caryl Churchill with Rosemary McHale as Jule and Anna Calder-Marshall as Annie.
"The relationship between the sisters is intense and at moments violent."

tactic of defence/protest. And implicitly, because of the centrality of the two themes, there appears to be a correlation made between his 'madness' and the political strategy of occupation; somewhere here is an insufficiently thought-out comparison between political spontaneism and individual madness.

There is also an unconscious form of sexism which pervades the structure of the play. The dominant figures of the play are men: Andy, Yorry and Dad — the madman, the intellectual and the working-class hero. The women, despite token remarks here and there, are all secondary supports. There are hints of Mum's rebellion against her housewife rôle, but her presence in the play is as a working-class wife and mother, not a working-class woman. Of the three daughters only Mary is offered as having a realistic grasp of what's happening to everyone (including Derek who comes back from police duties in Ireland to get Andy, who's on the run). But even Mary's development is as a foil and support for Andy's lashing-out violence. In many ways Mary develops more than anyone else in the course of the play; in one of the best sections she confronts Derek and Andy (separately) with the flaws in their positions. And yet her political autonomy is limited to her desire at the end of the play to having a baby alone. True, she couldn't be directly involved in the factory occupation; but when she is shown helping Yorry to type leaflets she says she doesn't understand what's in them. Despite her own 'bad dreams', she is still made to relate as an emotional woman, insisting on going with Yorry to the hospital when his Dad has an accident, the human instinct triumphing even after she's turned him down.

Finally there is the music, a mixture of good rock and lyricism. Unfortunately, too, the music fixes some of the most problematic areas of the play — women and love, the old unquestioned chestnuts.

By conventional 'poetic' standards all the songs about love and women are lovely, celebrating the dear creatures, love itself held up as both the natural randiness of men and the delicate, fragile, gentle beauty in women. A minor character, Yorry's uncle, sings slushy Welsh songs about women, and the songs the girls sing are by turns wistful, romantic and sweetly harmonious. In a world where men are involved in political struggle the women remain symbols of the fixed nature of 'love' and poetic images, and the mini-foray into Mary's nightmares.

The problems I've outlined are matters of conception and

structure, rather than John McGrath's ability to write narrative, witty scenes. But they are important precisely because the play is a serious one; it might be possible to defend some of the sexism by saying that the play is about a specific occupation which only involved the men. But this isn't enough. The play isn't a straight documentary, it is a reconstruction in which events have a double function: a realistic reflection of, and comment on, particular and recognisable situations, and a complex agit-prop function in which we come away with ideas which can relate back to our own political analyses and choices.

The way in which this consciousness-raising function of art works is still insufficiently understood and analysed, since it doesn't work in a simple cause and effect fashion. But if a play is to have an active impact on the members of its audience, it must act as a model which acts as a challenge and either tells us something we did not know, or tells us something we did know in such a way as to make us examine our own ideas and assumptions.

On the whole, this play fails to do that. We're left with (in my view) an insufficiently presented case for occupation as a political strategy, with a dubious link between capitalism and madness and a more or less conventional and reactionary view of love and women.

We are also left with a memory of a production in which there are many instances of excellent snatches of dialogue, jokes, enthusiastic playing and music.

It is a tremendously courageous effort by a theatre group whose political work in England and Scotland has been very important for left political and cultural struggles. One especially striking example of their work was 'The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black Black Oil', which was adapted for television, reached millions, and was a quite astounding blend of different media in one of the most progressive pieces of television I have ever seen. I hope it's repeated.

In 'Fish in the Sea' John McGrath tackled head-on the more difficult problem of how to write about struggles leading to new ways of life, feelings and ideas, and yet remain sufficiently rooted in the recognisable present. The fact that the product we see on the stage has serious contradictions is not an indictment of it or the people who have worked so hard on it, but of the difficulties that all of us in the related business face. Seeing other people's successes and mistakes is an encouragement to the rest of us to go on. □

FILMS

One Two Three

Directed by Sue Crockford
Distributed by Contemporary Films

One Two Three is the number of the house on Dartmouth Park Hill, Highgate New Town, where the Children's Community Centre is based. People involved in the centre have made a film of how it began and how it works. Children, parents and workers speak for themselves, not self-conscious before the cameras because they know the photographers, who also work at the centre.

It is a film to be used – to stimulate discussion of who looks after children and how, and to encourage other people to start similar projects themselves.

The centre, which opened in 1972, was the first to be controlled by parents and financed by a local council grant. It is open five days a week from 8.30 to 6.00, and is free, though parents help pay for food. Camden Council gives £4,000 a year for the running costs, and from this the collective pays two full-time workers. There's also a rota for voluntary help, so that four adults are generally there to look after the 18 under-fives. Every day the children and adults go out – to the launderette, the shops, to parks or bus-stations.

The children are encouraged to be cooperative, not competitive – "We encourage the girls to be more adventurous and the boys to be more gentle." They can make choices, discover their own freedom and respect the freedom of others – "sensitive to their own needs and the needs of others". Books, for instance, are carefully selected and discussed at the weekly meetings, but children also go to the library and choose their own books. They help with cooking and clearing up, becoming self-reliant – one woman describes how quickly her son took these habits home. All this encourages caring – we see a black girl comforting a white boy who is crying; they relate to each other "as brother and sister".

But there is still the problem of aggression – how to cope with the children's violence, when to intervene, indeed, how to cope with children altogether. We felt the film didn't show enough of this struggle, though it did discuss it. Similarly with sex role stereotyping, the film didn't show the struggle against it, but left it as theory, abstract assertions in the script.

The scenes in the park are highly romanticised: no squabbles over who throws whose bread to which duck, just pretty music and flowers and sunlight in their hair. This only reinforces the romantic myth of childhood repeated by the adverts on tele. *One Two Three* is trying to give a positive picture, make child-care attractive and not overdo the drawbacks. But the pretty picture is not realistic and so perhaps

doesn't quite work as propaganda. Unable to relate it to their own experience of looking after children, people may feel cynical – or guilty, because their days in the park aren't so idyllic!

The film points out the divisions in the community, a rundown "development" area – the division between older people who've lived there all their lives, and younger newcomers, many of them squatters, who have small children. It is honest about the division at the centre between middle-class women who can afford to give time to running the place and working-class women in full-time employment. The weekly meetings are meant to involve all parents in making policy and discussing problems, but obviously those who work there are most committed to the meetings, and so more involved in developing discussion of what the centre is trying to do with the children, and the political implications of this.

It is difficult to get a grant from a local authority and still preserve your own autonomy. The Children's Community Centre was lucky to have a sympathetic day-care and social services department, but there are still problems in getting and keeping a house. The film can't go into all these problems, but a more

detailed pamphlet is available to help other people deal with all this better than they did.

The pamphlet, *The Children's Community Centre – Our Experience of Collective Childcare* is available from 123 Dartmouth Park Hill, London N19, for 15p and 8p postage.

The film *One Two Three*, colour, 16mm, 32 minutes, is available from Contemporary Films, 55 Greek Street, London W1V 6DB or Liberation Films, 6 Branshill Gdns, London NW5. It costs £6 to hire (negotiable, and women from the centre would be willing to come and speak). □

Jill Nicholls and
Wisty Hoyland

THEATRE

The Trial of Marie Stopes Bubble Theatre Company

Despite thunder and lightning, the patter of rain upon canvas and the roar of heavy lorries down the Camden Road, the Bubble Theatre's tented mobile theatre in Cantelowes Park was packed with an enthusiastic and responsive audience.

The play is a courtroom drama,



1923 MARIE STOPES LEAVING THE LAW COURTS

adapted by Peter Coe from the verbatim transcript of the celebrated trial in 1923, in which Marie Stopes sued a Roman Catholic TB specialist, Dr Halliday Sutherland, for libel for writing in a book that she had "exposed the poor to experiment" by opening a birth-control clinic in the middle of a London slum "where working class women are instructed in a method of contraception described by Professor McIlroy 'as the most harmful method of which I have had experience'."

Professor, later Dame, Anne Louise McIlroy was the most eminent medical woman of her day, and the spiritual ancestor of Life, Spic, Human Rights, Soul, Order of Christian Unity and suchlike. Her firmly held views were quite uninfluenced by the facts. Contraception lead to infertility. Women who used the methods of birth control recommended by Marie Stopes would rue the day when they discovered that they could not have children later when they wanted them. (What a pity Arthur and Margaret Wynn, who published a booklet three years ago saying not that birth control lead to infertility, but that abortion did, did not have the opportunity of seeing this instructive play before making fools of themselves.)

Also, Dame Louise strongly objected to any such service or advice being provided by non-medical persons. There was no knowing where this sort of thing would lead – to The Pill Off Prescription, lay abortion counselling, and all kinds of other horrors, as she correctly foresaw.

Jeremy Anthony played Marie Stopes' counsel, Sir Patrick Hastings, with great verve, Carmen Sautoy as Marie Stopes, displayed just the right mixture of naivety, megalomania, dash and charm, Vivienne Ross played the appalling McIlroy with a splendidly authentic Ulster accent, and Joe Griffiths made an admirably odious male chauvinist pig of Sutherland.

The audience participated in the play as jury, and when asked to vote at the end, enthusiastically exonerated Marie Stopes and declared Sutherland guilty of libel. In real life, however, Lord Chief Justice Hewart, a noted reactionary figure, summed up in grotesquely hostile fashion; the jury returned a confused verdict; Sutherland won the case; Stopes appealed and won the second round. Finally, financed by Cardinal Bourne, Sutherland took the appeal to the House of Lords, and won. She was pregnant throughout these proceedings, and when, on the 27 March 1924, she gave birth to a son (at the age of 43) *The Times* refused to print the birth announcement. (Anyone who has followed the abortion controversy knows that what *The Times* doesn't want to know about, simply isn't printed. That's one tradition that hasn't changed over the past half century.)

Incidentally, Bubble does one-off performances at around £50 a throw for any group that wants to hire the company. For further information, ring Michael Napier, the administrator of this enterprising theatre. □

Madeleine Simms



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LESLIE MCINTYRE

In July this year doctors in the BMA rejected a voluntary ban on prescribing barbiturates. They claimed the ban would be an attack on clinical freedom. But what freedom is there for a barbiturate addict? A member of Essex Road, London, women's health group describes her mother's fight to free herself from barbiturates and Guinness.

My mother is a suburban housewife and always has been. Six months ago she gave up barbiturates and alcohol to which she'd become addicted. She didn't feel confident enough to write anything herself. First I'll explain a bit about the barbiturates.

Barbiturates are used for treating various mental conditions and sleeplessness. The long term dangers of taking them have been recognised now that enough people have suffered from them. The ease with which you can take an overdose has recently caused some doctors to panic.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Each year 1,800 to 2,000 people die from taking barbiturates — two thirds of the barbiturate deaths are said to be suicides. Many of those taking overdoses have been young addicts who inject barbiturates straight into the vein. The quieter, less spectacular sufferers are mostly housewives, often of my mother's age (60 this year) who have become addicts through no decision of their own. Doctors, never warning them of addiction, continue to provide prescriptions for years and years. Deaths in these cases are often accidental, the person just forgets how many pills they've taken that day, and takes another...

Three years ago, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs set up a working party to look into the problem of barbiturates. It discovered that 8,500,000 prescriptions are given out every year. This means that control of the drug would be very difficult and expensive. Instead they are organising CURB (the government financed Campaign on the Use and Restriction of Barbiturates) to educate doctors in ways of reducing prescriptions, of the dangers of sudden withdrawal, about less habit forming drugs to use as alternatives and so on. It's hoped that CURB's activities will gradually cut down the use of barbiturates.

Anyone being given a course of barbiturates should be warned not to drive or to drink. The drug can impair the judgement of time and space. The effect of alcohol is more dangerous. Alcohol acts on areas of the brain which are first stimulated and then depressed. Usually the chemical form of alcohol is changed in the liver. But the barbiturates are also changed in a way which competes with the alcohol. This means that less of the alcohol can be converted and it continues its action on the brain. Together they dampen down the electrical activity which controls breathing and heart rate. Eventually the body stops breathing because the "messages" are no longer telling it to do so. Unconsciousness is common through an overdose. Choking may occur and then vomiting. Some people die suffocating on their vomit.

In the future doctors will have to act more responsibly. Sudden withdrawal from the drugs can cause convulsions, unconsciousness and the shakes. You can't just tell people to pull themselves together. The cells of the body have come to depend on the drug and it can no longer be simply a decision in the person's mind to stop taking them.

I'll describe a bit about how my mother came to be taking barbiturates and how she decided to come off them. She had really devoted support day and night from my father, his sister and my sister. It was a terrible struggle for all of them and I think it would be very difficult for someone to do alone.

The London Hospital originally prescribed sodium amyltal and at the same time told her, "Guinness is good for the nerves." This was 26 years ago. She had been attending the hospital because of a nervous state that had built up over several years through the behaviour of a neighbour.

This neighbour was "mad". I remember one day her calling me and my sister mud pies. She couldn't have kids herself and was jealous of all the women round about who did have them. My mother got it worst I suppose because we lived a few doors away and my gran lived next door to her. She used to throw bottles at our door and chase my mother down the road and round the milk van. I was toddling and my sister was in a push chair. My mother was terrified when she was alone in the evenings.

She also always met me from school when I was 5 or 6 because she was afraid this woman would come and take me. When we saw her coming we had to duck behind walls or hedges. I remember nothing of this at all. Eventually my mother and other women round about had meetings to try and decide what to do. They asked the woman's husband along because he wouldn't believe what they were saying. Finally she was taken away to the "loony bin". She stayed there 15 years and had some sort of brain surgery. The whole thing sounds really terrible for everyone, and my mother had a kind of nervous breakdown.

What I do remember from childhood were the endless pill counting sessions — "Where's mother?" "She's upstairs counting her pills". There were outings started then abandoned because she had forgotten her pills, or was terrified once we left home. She couldn't bear to be in open spaces nor in strange enclosed spaces. She couldn't cross fields without something to hold on to. When we wanted to take the dog for a walk, she'd take the bike so she could lean on it. She told us kids that we took it to put the dog in the basket so it wouldn't get tired.

I never questioned any of this as I had nothing to compare it with — I thought every woman rested in the afternoon and took pills if she felt a bit miserable. I took some of hers and they certainly cleared up my miseries. One pill put me asleep for a solid fourteen hours. My father sometimes took them too. In the end they used to hide the bottles and rifle each other's supplies when they could. My mother took up to eight a day as well as three or four pints of Guinness. "Not all at once," she says, "I spaced them out."

The pills didn't all come from one doctor. She went to a private doctor to increase the supply. This shows just one of the evils of allowing private practice. For most of the 26 years the same two men, her own GP and the private doctor (a GP ten miles away who had some private patients), prescribed drugs for her. At times her GP made half-hearted attempts to cut down the dose, but he hadn't much in the way of alternative treatment to offer, and her persistence made him give in. Same with the Guinness man.

It never struck me as odd, until recently, that she should go down to the off licence at eight in the morning, long before it opened. She had some arrangement to go round and knock him up at the back door, or he'd leave the bottles on the step for her.

In the last couple of years things got worse. I noticed the bickering and nagging a lot more. Her face looked very droopy and her eyes glazed, her speech was getting slurred and she shook quite a lot. She didn't seem to concentrate or listen. I dreaded going home as both my parents seemed more and more miserable.

Just over a year ago she had a number of strange turns where her body just sort of collapsed and she had to more or less crawl to her room, and to the bed. So she decided to see a psychiatrist and through talking to him, and to me and my sister and father, she began to realise she was addicted. Until then she'd always claimed that she needed the pills and drink for her nerves. We had also been ignorant for far too long about the effect these pills have. Now she began to see that they were making her ill.

"It's the doctors' fault. They shouldn't have given them to me. They should have told me they were poisonous," she says now.

"You're not a drug addict, we call it dependence," said her psychiatrist. And for a while the situation dragged on and her feelings of never having done anything, being no good, not being liked and so on worsened. At last she decided to give it all up.

The psychiatrist suggested both NHS and private hospital treatment, but the family talked about it, and then, in her determined way, she said she'd do it at home or not at all. She says being at home made a difference.

"I don't like to go away, never have. I'd've been worrying all the time about what was happening here."

So... a day was set when she was to stop drinking and taking the pills. All at once, just like that. It's unusual to take someone right off instead of decreasing the dose gradually. Sudden withdrawal can be very dangerous. The doctor has not explained why he did this, and he is ill in hospital just now so I couldn't ask him about it.

She was immediately switched onto another batch of drugs said to be less dangerous, but it's a formidable list.

This long list amounts to 30 pills a day, all low dosage but it seems pretty hit or miss. Although pharmacists understand the chemical responses these different drugs will produce in the body, they do not know who will respond and feel better from having their chemical levels altered in one way or another. A more common approach to barbiturate withdrawal is to slowly take the dose down and to replace it with *Mogodon* which is a less dangerous sleeper.▶

Amtryptilin — an anti-depressant. This has side effects like a dry mouth and blurred vision. It should not be used with alcohol or by a person who has high blood pressure. Only 8% of people given it are said to respond to the treatment. It's been in use since 1964.

Stelazine — a more recent tranquiliser often used after addiction, for toxic psychosis, chronic alcoholism and anxiety states. The main difference between these two is that the first treats depression and the second anxiety. Both states are pretty much mixed together and doctors are often just guessing.

Valium — an anti-depressant and muscle relaxant. It's now widely used for states of tension and anxiety.

Equinal — another muscle relaxant.

Orovite — a special vitamin often used for a while after alcoholism.

Disipal — used to counteract the shakes which have often been drug induced.

Precious Women, by Dorothy Anne Liot Backer
A Feminist Phenomenon in the Age of Louis XIV

Apparently, womanhood's struggle for a distinctive consciousness is nothing new. In Precious Women, Dorothy Anne Liot Backer gives us a uniquely sensitive, vivid picture of the French women of the 17th Century — princesses, duchesses, bourgeois, prudes and coquettes, nuns and actresses and kitchen-maids — who, feeling trapped by the liabilities of their sex, united in a social and cultural movement directed against philistinism, vulgarity and monotony of their society, cloth £6.00

Basic Books Inc. 28 Tavistock Street, London WC2E 7PN

Middlesex Polytechnic

Study Sociology

Apply now to start this autumn on our four-year sandwich course leading to a BA and BA Honours in Social Science, and specialise in Sociology.

You would study a number of themes, including the philosophical and historical background to marxism and sociology, the roots of racism and sexism, revolutionary movements and the dynamics of domination in industrial societies and the third world.

Apart from a wide range of options, it is also possible to relate your studies to psychology, social work, economics and geography, and other major areas of social thought such as the philosophy of science.

One year is devoted to a work placement, either in Britain or abroad, which provides valuable work experience and often the possibility of a career upon graduation.

Entry requirements: Either two A levels and three O levels, or a good ONC or OND, or, for those over 25 years of age, a 2,000 word essay on a contemporary social problem.

Write or telephone for further details to: The Admissions Office, Middlesex Polytechnic (Ref. C61), 82-88 Church Street, Edmonton, London N9 9PD, telephone 01-805 0892.

"He said it would be like going into a black tunnel but that there'd be light at the other end. The first few weeks were very difficult — very very difficult. I was shaking all over for three days. The whole bed was shaking. I had no sleep — I couldn't get to sleep. There was this hot burning right through my head. I thought, oh well, something must be happening. I felt like I would just have to scream out, but I didn't."

She stayed in bed for nearly two weeks.

Father: At that time the doctor said to ring whenever we wanted to check what was happening. I'd ring three or four times a day then, wouldn't I, to check the effects.

Mother: Then how the bed shook. And I didn't want to eat. I wished I hadn't done it.

Father: And all you wanted was a drink, wasn't it?

Mother: Oh, I kept saying, "If only I could have a glass of Guinness, I'd give up the pills." I don't think I'd drink Guinness again now. I'd go for ale. [This is six months after stopping.]

Father: You went for it all before didn't you? Come on now.

Mother: laughs. She often laughs now when she's talking. I realised that I hadn't heard her laugh so heartily like that for years and years, and I asked, "Did you drink other things as well as the Guinness?"

Mother: Yes, I did — not spirits though.

Father: I know, I marked the bottle.

Mother: I know you did, that's like you.

Father: Well, it was for your own good. I'd get a bottle of wine and it'd all be gone — that was as well as the Guinness and the pills.

Mother: laughs again.

Me: Would you advise other people to give up like you did?

Mother: Oh yes, I'd advise anyone to do it.

Me: Do you think the hospital did wrong to give you the pills in the first place?

Mother: Well, they didn't tell me anything, did they. They didn't pay much attention.

Me: What about all these other pills you're taking now?

Mother: He (the doctor) says he'll get me off them all, but I think, well after 26 years, I can't see I'll ever be off them *all* now.

Me: What really made you give it all up?

Mother: Well, I knew I was doing wrong. I was sleeping so much — sleeping all the time. I shouldn't have been sleeping like that, I don't know. If anyone asked me how I was, I'd say I felt rotten, really rotten. [I remember that, whenever I saw her she'd say, "I don't feel myself." She hasn't said that the last six months, it's always, "I feel much better, if only I could stop the shaking," but that's going gradually now.]

Mother: I wanted to do things but I had no interest in them, you know I *couldn't* do them. And I was increasing the Guinness and increasing the pills at the same time. I could tell it was them making me feel bad. I wanted to feel different, and I do now.

Me: Wasn't there anything you kept in mind — you know, something to get you through the first days when you stopped?

Mother: Well, no, I can't think of anything, the strength was just there. The strength was just given me somehow. I knew I wanted to feel better. I knew what I was doing wasn't good for my health and I was just determined.

For years there'd been problems, mother saying she'd do things and not doing them. It used to drive my father and her friends crazy. Now she says she's interested in things. She doesn't like to be alone at all, although she always sleeps alone. My father is retired so they take things easy and just go out and enjoy themselves in a quiet way.

For so long it was painful for me to go and see them. We would all argue and nag and someone would cry. It always seemed over nothing. I felt torn apart between them, my mother's paranoia and my father's patience, their dependence on each other and their continual bickering and arguing because the other wasn't how they wanted them to be. My stomach felt tense and knotted, and I would hold back the tears seeing them so unhappy and feeling there was nothing I could do. I was all wrong too. I really thought the problems were so deep and so many that stopping addiction wouldn't really alter much. I was worried by my father's desperate clinging to the idea as if a miracle was going to happen and as if the years of problems would just disappear. Well, they didn't disappear, but the change is far greater than I thought possible. Her face is completely different, her behaviour too.

Doctors' treatment of women and their particular problems is often irresponsible, as this story shows. Instead of admitting their own helplessness and lack of understanding when confronted with such cases, they pretend they have the answer, the cure, and prescribe drugs that may hide the problem (or create another). The women patients are encouraged to have complete unquestioning trust in the doctor's methods, and no trust in themselves.

So much of my mother's behaviour must have been drug induced, creeping up on her slowly over the years. How different could all those years of her life, our lives, and loads of other peoples' have been, if only medicine was a more honest and caring part of our society. □

Readers Poems

Neruda and Neill
died on the same day.
Both honourable men
seeking clarity and kindness
but bulwarked by scarce acknowledged
back-up artistes:
wives, diplomats,
you know — the usual.
So every singing line
has a context.

Sue Crockford

Women's voices, sensible and bright —
the radio talks to no one.
Raindrops run on the window. The light
of the December day is gone.
Steam rises under the iron; the smell
of damp cloth waves in the air;
the gas fire whispers. Who could tell
some years ago, that I would be here?
All of a sudden, things have moved further
away from what I thought would be.
The woman is ironing — is it my mother?
The child on the floor — is it me?

Barbara Day

Blues of the Wedding Bell Girl
See me in white
Like a maid of the snow
In a cool satin dress
And my hair all aflow

Sweet orange blossom and
Roses and pinks
And my guy stands beside me
In shirt and cufflinks.

Yeesh just see me in white
I'm already to go
I can see me in white but
He don't want to know.

Don't tell me what I need today
I'm just not in the mood
I'm sorry if I'm hurting you
I don't mean to be rude.

Naked as sin
An army towel covering my body
Son the flush somehow
Knees turning to jelly
Next.

Rebecca



Recent court rulings have altered a woman's claims to her home when she gets divorced or leaves the man she's living with. Felicity Crowther, who works as a solicitor in London, answers questions about housing rights.

Rented Accommodation

If a man is paying the rent, can he legally evict the woman he is living with?

Yes, the woman has occupied the premises only under licence (permission) from the tenant. This licence can be withdrawn at any time. However, she can be evicted only under a court order.

If the tenancy of rented accommodation is in a husband's name alone, can he evict his wife?

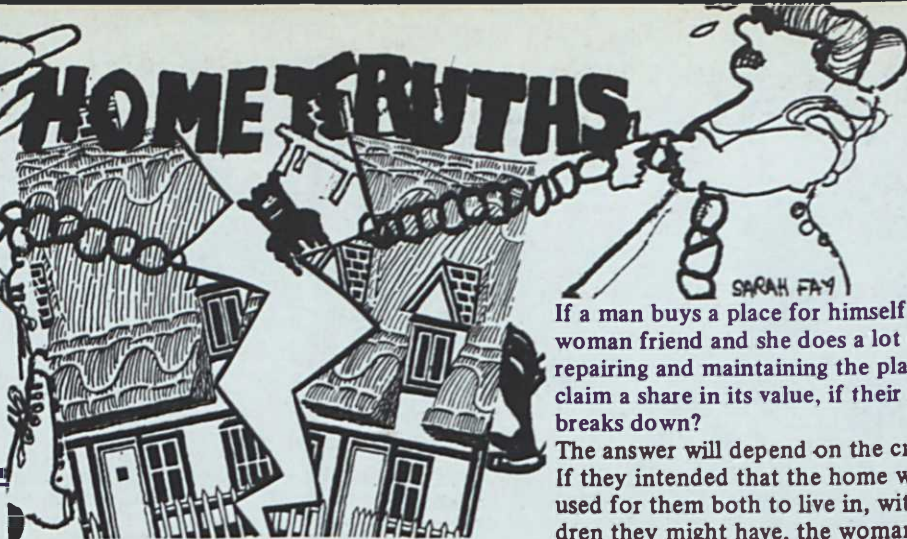
No, the Matrimonial Homes Act 1967 protects a wife from eviction and, if she has already been evicted, will compel her husband to let her back in. The act applies to privately rented or council property.

When a husband and wife have been living in a rented flat for which the rent book is in the husband's name, can the wife claim the transfer of the tenancy to her in divorce proceedings?

The court can order the transfer of property from one to another in divorce proceedings. It was recently decided that 'property' can include a weekly tenancy for which one person has been responsible, provided there is nothing either in existing law or in the contract under which she or he rents the property, to prevent him or her. (The order could not be made, for example, if the contract forbade the assignment of the tenancy to another person.)

If a woman wants to separate from her husband but remain in their home with the children, is there any way she can force him to leave?

It is difficult to obtain an order from the court forcing the husband to leave the home. It is not particularly relevant whether the home is in his name only or in joint names. The woman must prove that she and the children are in physical danger or in mental danger if he remained there, or in real fear of such danger. The court will be far more influenced by the children's situation than the woman's. If the court thinks that the situation is intolerable for her and the children, it will order the husband to leave within a few days. At a later stage, during divorce proceedings, the woman can ask for an order transferring the matrimonial home to her. The court will take all relevant factors into consideration, such as the ages of the children, contributions the wife has made to the home, and so on. A common order is that the wife and children are to stay in the home until the youngest child has finished education, and that the home is then to be sold and the proceeds divided fairly between the man and woman.



Privately Owned Homes

If the home is purchased by the husband in his name only, can he sell it without his wife's consent?

This depends on whether the wife has taken legal steps to protect herself. If a woman is married to a man she is living with, she can register her married status on the property's title. Depending on the type of property and the area in which it is located, she sends a simple document (which a Law Centre or Citizens Advice Bureau can obtain) to the Land Registry or the Land Charges Dept. Her interest is then recorded, and the property cannot be sold without her consent, since a prospective purchaser will discover her interest when making a search in the official records.

If a property is in the names of two people, can one of them ever sell it without the other's consent?

No, the rules are very strict. If the title deeds show that more than one person is registered as an owner, the sale can only take place with the written consent of all of them. If one of them has changed her or his name (eg, through marriage) proof of this change must be produced (eg, a marriage certificate). If one has died, similar proof must be shown.

How can a woman claim any part of the value of the home which is in her husband's name alone?

There are various ways in which a woman can build up her claim to a share in the home's value. If she contributed directly to the purchase price, her husband holds the property 'on trust' for her to the extent of her contribution, and must reimburse her in proportion to her contribution if the property is sold. The situation becomes more complicated if the woman's contribution is less direct. What if the husband and wife pool their earnings and pay the mortgage instalments out of the pool? If the woman keeps an exact record of everything she has put into the pool, she can calculate what proportion of the home's value she is entitled to. If she doesn't, the court would probably decide that the home belonged to the husband and wife equally. This approach was modified recently, when the court decided that what counted was what the couple had agreed when they had bought the home. It may be more difficult for a woman who moves into a place her husband had bought before they married, to prove that her help with mortgage payments gives her a share in the home's value.

If a man buys a place for himself and his woman friend and she does a lot of work in repairing and maintaining the place, can she claim a share in its value, if their relationship breaks down?

The answer will depend on the circumstances. If they intended that the home would be used for them both to live in, with any children they might have, the woman may be able to establish a 'constructive trust'. This is a legal term that means that she is entitled to a share in the value of the property corresponding to the value of the work she did to improve and maintain the place, and that the legal owner of the property must hold the woman's share of the property on trust for her. If the property is sold, the woman can claim the proportion of the proceeds of sale that relate to her contribution. In a recent case, the woman had stripped wallpaper, painted woodwork, broken up the concrete in the garden and erected a garden shed, as well as having looked after the couple's two children. It was decided that she was entitled to a quarter of the property's value.

Custody

If a woman is in insecure or inadequate accommodation, will she fail to get custody of her children?

There is a vicious circle in custody disputes when a woman leaves home with the children and goes into homeless family accommodation or starts squatting. She begins divorce proceedings and claims custody of the children. The council will not rehouse her until she has a custody order. The court is reluctant to give her custody until she has satisfactory accommodation. Fortunately housing officials and judges are becoming more aware of the problem, and the court may award custody if satisfied that council accommodation will be available very soon.

If a woman has no fixed address can she obtain legal aid and social security benefits?

If a woman does not have a permanent address, she may find it difficult to obtain social security benefits or legal aid. Usually legal aid officials will accept short-term housing, reception centres, and Women's Aid Centres as appropriate addresses. However, recently there have been complaints about the intransigent refusal of social security officials to consider a claim from a woman without a permanent address. This would be particularly hard on a woman who wanted to leave her husband but could not pay for lodgings until she had received social security. □

If readers have questions about the law which they would like Felicity to answer, write to her c/o Spare Rib, 9 Newburgh Street, London W1A 4XS. She is sorry that she cannot reply to letters personally.

Get your back copies here ☆

Every back copy ordered
helps pay the printers' bill.
Fight for the magazine
that fights with you.

5/Nov 72 Micheline Wandor undermines the nuclear family. Life on an escort agency's books. Life in girls' comics. NEWS Biba's workforce begin to unionise. SPARE PARTS Shoe repairs and leather work.

6/Dec 72 What the revolution has done for women in Cuba. Secretarial sexism. NEWS Why are there so few day nurseries in London? SPARE PARTS Christmas presents, decorations, toys.

8/Feb 73 'School Daze Sexuality': Guilt and tension between boys and girls at a North of England school. Laura Mulvey on object (ie women) fetishism in painter Allen Jones. Everything you need(ed) to know about abortion. SPARE PARTS Changing a tap washer; insulation and lagging.



9/March 73 Chinese women and the cultural revolution. Family Allowance or Tax Credits? SPARE PARTS Floorboards, sanding, laying tiles.

List the issues you want (35p each incl. p+p) and send this form to Back Copies, c/o Linda Phillips, 114 George Street, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2EJ.

Cheques/POs payable to Spare Ribs Ltd. ☆

Name

Address

Please send issues

Spare Ribs Ltd. is a non-profit making organisation.

10/April 73 The female croupier's underworld. NEWS 500 women protest inadequate Tory anti-discrimination proposals. Multi-faceted speak-out on discrimination in Caxton Hall. SPARE PARTS Preparing walls and woodwork for (inventive) coverings.

11/May 73 How the Stones rocked to stardom on teenage fantasy. How thin is the line deviating women in Holloway from women outside? NEWS Equal Pay: employers organise to defeat women's demands. SPARE PARTS Bicycles, new and secondhand.

12/June 73 Sheila Rowbotham: What lies behind dolls? Chiswick Women's Aid. Erica Jong says 'Success for women is always partly failure'. How a New York professor says nothing about the female orgasm in 443 pages.

13/July 73 Was Hitler a Nazi sex symbol? Betty Friedan: 'Each of us thought she was a freak 10 years ago'. Do-it-yourself divorce. NEWS 'Radical feminism rears its head': women's history. SPARE PARTS Cars: tool kits, care and maintenance, changing a wheel.

14/August 73 Pat Hartley tells how the groupies chose the groups. The facts about custody. 'Fasten your safety belts, Spare Rib, it's gonna be a bumpy ride': Jim Anderson reviews 'Voices from Gay Liberation'. NEWS First major clash over equal pay. SPARE PARTS All types of kite.

15/Sept 73 'Naive sucker that I am, I never expected this pain': John Miles on the nitty-gritty of jealousy. Why are women's studies so controversial? NEWS Facts and feminism on Family Allowances. SPARE PARTS Care and maintenance of your body (or, Keep Fit).

16/Oct 73 'Shut her up. Don't let her be heard': Jane Fonda explains why she has become a political activist. How does a women's self-help therapy group work? Attitudes to women's work in industry. 'A snigger and a giggle... and the message is killing': Paul Raymond's revues. SPARE PARTS Where to learn self-defence.

18/Nov 73 Sex shops: enjoyable erotica or oppressive heterosexual norm? Anne Nightingale tells how hard it is for women on Radio 1. How the female religion was stamped out. NEWS Coup in Chile attacks women's rights. SPARE PARTS Curtains and roller blinds.

19/Dec 73 1971 census explodes myths about women's role. Women artists in revolutionary Russia. Peter Pan reassessed: repression and insecurity. NEWS Changing role of women in Northern Ireland. SPARE PARTS Lampshades.

20/Jan 74 Anne Severson's film about vaginas. Women as agents provocateurs in adult education. Rape law. 'Liberated trendies'? — Arianna Stassinopoulos' account of women's liberation.

24/June 74 Molly Parkin and Lee Comer interviewed. Pre-menstrual tension. Comprehensive list of non-sexist children's books. Sheila Rowbotham: BBC's 'Shoulder to Shoulder'. NEWS Lane Abortion Report.

26/Aug 74 Being a woman doctor. How the housewife's role has changed through history. Women militants in 'Portuguese' Africa. American quilts. Conga player Terri Quaye interviewed. NEWS Jean Gardiner on the social contract. SPARE PARTS Developing your own photos.

27/Sept 74 Why the Working Women's Charter is needed. 'Sex and Silence in the Classroom': a discussion about war. Sheila Rowbotham: women's music from US mining areas. Film violence: the he-man myth. NEWS Finer Report on One-Parent Families.

28/Oct 74 Why women starve themselves. Amrit Wilson talks to police-women. NEWS Childminders join NUPE. Jean Gardiner: Equal Pay Act loopholes. Abortion campaign in West Germany.

29 Nov 74 Olive Schreiner, 19th century socialist and feminist. 'I tried to make love but I closed up completely': vaginismus. Chemical contraceptives con. NEWS Bradford Gay Liberation zap BMA's Psychosexual Problems Conference. Do we need the Women's TUC?

30/Dec 74 Personal change: from psychoanalysis to consciousness-raising, collective living and political work. How many hysterectomies are unnecessary? Red Ladder Theatre women's play. NEWS US rape victim Inez Garcia convicted of murder. Jean Gardiner: the politics of nationalisation. US equal opportunity legislation.

31/Jan 75 Lucy: a life crowded with poverty. 'What happened at Heywood': Salford Electrical Instruments equal pay strike. NEWS Keith Joseph and the birth rate. Women as teachers in special education. Gay wives and mothers. Jean Gardiner: How are profits determined?

32/Feb 75 81-year-old Jessie Stephens on her early political life in Glasgow. Stardom and political subversion: Angela Davis interviewed. Pill Report: information or propaganda? Sheila Hancock: 'But I honestly don't like this idea of an only women company'. Dory Previn interviewed: 'Your outer shell is fragile but your centre is fierce'. First Editorial: Why do we work collectively?

33/March 75 Sterilisation of women: facts and feelings. 'Inside': indictment of prison system, illustrations by Pat Arrowsmith. Frankie Armstrong: folk music and the women's movement. Germaine Greer: population control. Margaret Walters: Playgirl and Viva. SPARE PARTS How to rent women's films.



34/April 75 Battered women rebuild their lives. Letters criticising 'What happened at Heywood' (Spare Rib 31) with first of two articles in response: 'Women's Employers — General Electric Company'. Checklist of women's music from America. NEWS ABORTION ACT THREAT James White's Abortion (Amendment) Bill; list of MPs who voted for its Second Reading. SPARE PARTS Self help herbs.

35/May 75 Communal upbringing in Scotland. GEC women's struggles. New serial: Exercise in Trust — Correspondence between Two Women: a lesbian writer's process of self-discovery guided by a feminist therapist. NEWS Fakenham workers' co-operative. Jean Gardiner: Common Market Referendum. ABORTION ACT THREAT House of Commons Select Committee; list of MPs who voted against Second Reading of White's Bill; West European legislation.

36/June 75 Pain in Childbirth. 'Mouselike': short story about alienated sex. Valium. NEWS Is the government planning to expand child-minding on the cheap? Bradford Gay Liberation organise follow-up to BMA Conference (see Spare Rib 29). ABORTION ACT THREAT What the White Bill would mean if passed; how to take the campaign into your area.



37/July 75 Breast cancer: diagnosis and treatment; personal experience; self-examination. Margaret Walters on Janis Joplin. NEWS Phan Thi Minh interviewed: 'I could talk for half a day about women in Vietnam'. ABORTION ACT THREAT Round-up of National Abortion Campaign activity.

Easy Rider Baby Sling



- *new freedom for everyone with a baby*
- *leaves both hands free*
- *for newborn babies and toddlers*
- *worn front or back*
- *padded for comfort and support*
- *has no metal frame*
- *light — weighs only 13oz*
- *made from high quality blue cotton*



The sling costs £4.50 (p&p included). Please make cheques payable to Spare Ribs Ltd and send with this coupon to Spare Rib c/o Easy Rider, 8a Christchurch Avenue, London NW6

name

address

.....

.....



Page	Title	Author	Rights
1	Young Cypriot men	Maidlow, Caroline	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Young Cypriot men. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
4	Letters		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for this item. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
5	Tonight Fists for Fury	CAZ	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Tonight Fists for Fury. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
6	Cartoon from Snakes and Ladders		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Cartoon from Snakes and Ladders. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
7	Management Attitues and Practice towards Women at Work	Gardiner, Jean	Usage Terms: © Jean Gardiner
7	from The Moon for Dinner		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for from The Moon for Dinner. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
8	Why Do We Say "Abortion: A Woman's Right to Choose"?		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Why Do We Say "Abortion: A Woman's Right to Choose"?. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
9	Mrs Dora Tamana		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Mrs Dora Tamana. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
11	Dora's group		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Dora's group. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
11	1955 Dora with two friends		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for 1955 Dora with two friends. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
11	1970 Dora outside her house		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for 1970 Dora outside her house. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
			Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate

12	1950s demonstrating against the extension of pass laws to women		the copyright holder for 1950s demonstrating against the extension of pass laws to women. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
14	Seeing Through Science	Women and Science Collective	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Seeing Through Science. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
15	Seeing Through Science	Women and Science Collective	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Seeing Through Science. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
15	collage of misleading advertising		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for collage of misleading advertising. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
17	Puerto Rico: 35 percent of women of childbearing age sterilized	Di Pietro, Lynn	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Puerto Rico: 35 percent of women of childbearing age sterilized. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
17	woodcut of woman agriculturalist		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for woodcut of woman agriculturalist. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
18	Puerto Rico: 35 percent of women of childbearing age sterilized	Di Pietro, Lynn	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Puerto Rico: 35 percent of women of childbearing age sterilized. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
18	Map of Caribbean region		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Map of Caribbean region. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
19	Puerto Rico: 35 percent of women of childbearing age sterilized	Di Pietro, Lynn	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Puerto Rico: 35 percent of women of childbearing age sterilized. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
19	Puerto Rican independence demonstrators		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Puerto Rican independence demonstrators. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
			Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Women's Hospital to

20	Women's Hospital to stay open?		stay open?. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
20	Crimes against women tribunal meets this winter		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Crimes against women tribunal meets this winter. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
20	Snags in training scheme for women over 35		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Snags in training scheme for women over 35. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
20	An outline of labour history in two hours		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for An outline of labour history in two hours. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
20	woman hung by tape measure		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for woman hung by tape measure. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
21	Keeping the growers honest		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Keeping the growers honest. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
21	News		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for this item. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
22	Abortion news: Select Committee hearings condemn White's Bill	Warren, Liz	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Abortion news: Select Committee hearings condemn White's Bill. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
23	Abortion news: Select Committee hearings condemn White's Bill	Warren, Liz	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Abortion news: Select Committee hearings condemn White's Bill. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
23	South London Curate: "I feel I know the mind of God"		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for South London Curate: "I feel I know the mind of God". Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
23	South London curate		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for South London curate . Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any

			information you have regarding this item.
23	Abortion is murder protest		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Abortion is murder protest. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
23	outside south London church		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for outside south London church. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
23	outside south London church		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for outside south London church. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
24	Abortion news: 160,000 good reasons a year?		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Abortion news: 160,000 good reasons a year?. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
24	Professor Peter Huntingford at NAC meeting in Deptford	Harrison, John	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Professor Peter Huntingford at NAC meeting in Deptford. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
24	Now Irish Women Demand Right to Choose		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Now Irish Women Demand Right to Choose. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
24	Shoving Government into action		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Shoving Government into action. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
24	Abortion report "not ethically sound"?		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Abortion report "not ethically sound"?. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
24	Labour Party NEC supports 67 Act		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Labour Party NEC supports 67 Act. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
26	International Women's Year: Three Views	Rathbone, Jenny	Usage Terms: © Jenny Rathbone, Assembly Member for Cardiff Central (Labour), National Assembly for Wales
			Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate

27	International Women's Year: Three Views		the copyright holder for International Women's Year: Three Views . Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
27	During July Indian women in London demonstrated against Indira Gandhi's repressive measure	Davies, Chris	Usage Terms: © Chris Davies (enquiries@arenapal.com). This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.
28	International Women's Year: Three Views		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for International Women's Year: Three Views . Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
30	Clothes	Wilson, Elizabeth	Usage Terms: © Elizabeth Wilson
30	woman looking in shop window	Sparham, Laurence	Usage Terms: © Laurence Sparham. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.
30	woman shopping for shoes	Sparham, Laurence	Usage Terms: © Laurence Sparham. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.
31	Clothes	Wilson, Elizabeth	Usage Terms: © Elizabeth Wilson
31	Mitzi Gaynor		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Mitzi Gaynor. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
31	wine advert		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for wine advert. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
31	Everything 5p!	Fay, Sarah	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Everything 5p! Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
31	Cartoon	Fay, Sarah	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Cartoon. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
32	Clothes	Wilson, Elizabeth	Usage Terms: © Elizabeth Wilson
32	dresses hanging on fence		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for dresses hanging on fence. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any

			information you have regarding this item.
32	lounging in the park in summer	Sparham, Laurence	Usage Terms: © Laurence Sparham. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.
34	Cypriot Stories	Zeynep, Maria, Ayse	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Cypriot Stories. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
34	Cypriot men	Maidlow, Caroline	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Cypriot men. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
35	Cypriot Stories	Zeynep, Maria, Ayse	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Cypriot Stories. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
35	Cypriot men	Maidlow, Caroline	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Cypriot men. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
36	Cypriot Stories	Zeynep, Maria, Ayse	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Cypriot Stories. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
36	Cypriot man	Maidlow, Caroline	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Cypriot man. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
37	Positive Discrimination	Wandor, Michelene	Usage Terms: © Michelene Wandor
38	Positive Discrimination	Wandor, Michelene	Usage Terms: © Michelene Wandor
39	Positive Discrimination	Wandor, Michelene	Usage Terms: © Michelene Wandor
39	Objections to Sex and Violence by Carul Churchill with Rosemay McHale and Anna Calder-Marshall	Davies, Chris	Usage Terms: © Chris Davies (enquiries@arenapal.com). This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.
40	One Two Three	Hoyland, Wisty; Nicholls, Jill	Usage Terms: © Wisty Hoyland. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.; Usage Terms: © Jill Nicholls
40	The Trial of Marie Stopes	Simms, Madeleine	Usage Terms: © Madeleine Simms

40	Marie Stopes in 1923		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Marie Stopes in 1923. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
41	book illustration: meet Linda King by Anen Oates		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for book illustration: meet Linda King by Anen Oates. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
41	book illustration: Who Cares? By Barbara Boyers		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for book illustration: Who Cares? By Barbara Boyers. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
41	book illustration: Ann and Peter in Love by Clifford Parfitt		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for book illustration: Ann and Peter in Love by Clifford Parfitt. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
42	Coming Off Drugs and Alcohol		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Coming Off Drugs and Alcohol. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
42	bottles	McIntyre, Leslie	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for bottles. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
43	Coming Off Drugs and Alcohol		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Coming Off Drugs and Alcohol. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
44	Coming Off Drugs and Alcohol		Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Coming Off Drugs and Alcohol. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
45	Neruda and Neill ...	Crockford, Sue	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Neruda and Neill Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
45	I have never had a climax ...	Chalmers, Margaret S.	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for I have never had a climax Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
45	Women's voices, sensible and bright ...	Day, Barbara	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Women's voices, sensible and bright Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.

45	Blues of the Wedding Bell Girl ...	Rebecca	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Blues of the Wedding Bell Girl Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
45	collage of photographs	McCormack, Ron	Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for collage of photographs. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.
46	Home Truths	Crowther, Felicity	Usage Terms: © Felicity Crowther